THE RÁMÁYAN.

VOL. I.

THE

RÁMÁYAN OF VÁLMÍKI

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

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TO

THE HONOURABLE

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LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF THE NORTH-WESTERN

PROVINCES OF INDIA

THIS TRANSLATION

OF

THE GREAT EPIC POEM OF THE HINDUS

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

BOOK I.

BOOK II.

NOTE.

a is pronounced like u in fun.
á like a in father.
e like a in fate.
i like i in fill.
í like ee in feel.
u like u in full
ú like u in flute.
ai like i in fire.
au like ou in foul.
y is a consonant only.
ś is pronounced nearly as sh.

CORRIGENDA.

Page	*line*	*for*	*read*
5	5	Ikshvaku	Ikshváku.
28	21	Ravaṇ	Rávaṇ.
41	28	Vahlí	Váhli.
Note	3	Vahlíka	Váhlíka.
71	6	Suráshtra	Suráshṭra.
44	9	Arthasádak	Arthasádhak.
159,170	4;2,13	Śona	Śoṇa.
188	12	being	bring.
217,220,221	22;3,9;18	Satánanda	Śatánanda.
287	15	Jáválí	Jáváli.
293	11	Śaśivindhus	Śaśivindus.
300	11	Phálguṇí	Phálguni.
363	Head-line	XI	IX.

INTRODUCTION.

The subject of the Rámáyan, the great national epic of the Hindus, their one common and everlasting possession, is, as the name implies,[1] the life and adventures of Ráma. These adventures are briefly summarized in the introductory cantos of the poem and do not require to be dwelt upon here. The great exploit and main subject of the epic is the war which Ráma waged with the giant Rávan, the fierce and mighty King of Lanká or Ceylon and the dread oppressor of Gods and nymphs and saints and men. 'The army,' to borrow the words of Gorresio, 'which Ráma led on this expedition was, as appears from the poem, gathered in great part from the region of the Vindhyan hills, but the races which he assembled are represented in the poem as monkeys, either out of contempt for their barbarism or because at that time they were little known to the Sanskrit-speaking Hindus. The people against whom Ráma waged war are, as the poem indicates in many places, different in origin, in civilization, and in worship, from the Sanskrit Indians; but the poet of the Rámáyan, in this respect like Homer who assigns to Troy customs, creeds, and worship similar to those of Greece, places in Ceylon, the seat of this alien and hostile people, names,

[1] From *Ráma* and *ayana*, Ráma's Adventures. Schlegel Latinizes the Sanskrit title into Rámeis. In conformity with Indian custom I write Rámáyan with the dental or undotted 'n' and without the final 'a,' as we speak of the Iliad and Æneid and not of the Ilias and Æneis.

'Dreadful abstinence
And conquering penance of the mutinous flesh,
Deep contemplation, and unwearied study,
In years outstretched beyond the date of man.'[1]

The same authority makes Válmíki contemporary with Ráma, and assigns the composition of the poem to the age which saw the accomplishment of the great enterprise which forms its subject. 'Critical inquiry,' says Lassen, 'will not allow the actual authorship of Válmíki and the handing down of the poem unchanged from the beginning to pass current;'[2] while Gorresio maintains that 'the popular tradition which makes Válmíki contemporary with Ráma and relates all the particulars of the first propagation of the Rámáyan appears as probable and as worthy of credit as any other ancient fact historically related.' The internal evidence offered by the poem is sufficiently strong confirmation of its remote antiquity, although it is impossible to fix even approximately the date of its composition.[3] Portions of this

[1] Shelley's *Hellas*.

[2] *Indische Alterthumskunde*, *I*. 484.

[3] 'The Greeks did not acquire any intimate knowledge of India. They applied themselves chiefly to describe the regions, situations, the climate, the natural productions of the Indian soil, the dress, the arms, and the customs of the inhabitants. No aid, then, can be hoped for from the Greeks to discover the age of the Rámáyan, as nothing can be concluded against its antiquity from our finding no mention of it in the works of those writers. Nor can precise data be obtained even from Indian writers, data impressed with a certain stamp of historical truth, sufficient by themselves to establish the indubitable age of the poem. Indian minds were always more inclined to meditate than to narrate, to launch themselves boldly into the regions of the ideal and the infinite rather than to consign to memory in their reality events circumscribed within narrow limits: in one word, history was checked by contemplation and poesy.' GORRESIO.

and other evidence I will now lay before the reader, gathered chiefly from Gorresio's Introduction to his magnificent edition of the Rámáyan.

'What I have said,' observes Gorresio, 'with regard to the antiquity of Ráma may be applied to Válmíki the author of the Rámáyan, whose synchronism with Ráma is indicated, as I have pointed out, in the introduction to the poem, and confirmed by two passages of the poem itself. In such a case the question would be ended and the antiquity of the poem proved, although without determining its age with absolute precision, a difficult question not in the case of the Rámáyan only but in the poems of Homer themselves. But because there will be found some people to whom the testimony of the introduction to the poem will appear suspicious, and the authority of the two passages (not found in the Bengal recension) doubtful, I will here condense the indications and arguments which appear to me to confirm the antiquity of the Rámáyan. Passing over the Puráṇa period I come to the era of Vikramáditya (57 B. C.) Here I find a poem which celebrates in a compendious form the exploits sung in the Rámáyan, I mean the Raghuvanśa of Kálidása.[1] The poet himself in his introduction gives direct testimony that preceding poets have opened the way for him in this same subject. It is hardly necessary to say that amongst these poets Válmíki is certainly comprised, the copious and original source of all the poems which celebrate the deeds of Ráma. As I proceed beyond the age

[1] A later date is by most scholars assigned to this poem.

of Kálidása these appears before me a great epic monument to which Indian tradition ascribes a most remote antiquity so far as to make Vyaśa the compiler of the Vedas its author. This monument is the Mahábhárata. I bow before this colossal epic: but without wishing to detract from its antiquity, I do not hesitate to declare it less ancient than the Rámáyan. And here I first observe that when we speak of the antiquity of a literary monument, especially an epic one, we must distinguish the elements of which it is composed from the arranging hand which collected and put them together. These elements may be most ancient; and so are in fact the elements of the Mahábhárata: the work of arranging and uniting them may be more or less ancient. And it is precisely this work of union and arrangement in the Mahábhárata which I affirm to be later than that in the Rámáyan. If this posteriority were not declared in the Mahábhárata itself which says that the exploits of Ráma had already been sung by Válmíki inspired by Nárada, it would be sufficiently proved by the fact that there is embodied in the Mahábhárata a summary of the Rámáyan of Válmíki in the same order and very often in the same words. Besides, the life and worship of Krishṇa celebrated in the Mahábhárata indicate an age later than the Rámáyan in which there is no mention of Krishṇa or Krishṇaism. ....The invention of the *śloka* attributed to Válmíki in the introduction to the Rámáyan appears to confirm the antiquity of the poem.........It should be observed that the *śloka* is not only mentioned in the

Rig-veda but the very metre is used. How can these apparent contradictions be reconciled? Tradition says that Válmíki was the inventor of the *śloka* and that he first made use of it in the Rámáyan: but in the Rámáyan the Vedas are very frequently spoken of in which the *śloka* is both mentioned and employed. It may be that the hymns referred to are later than the Rámáyan; but at present we must be content to leave the difficulty unsolved.........

The Rámáyan is mentioned in the Rájataranginí (Rájataranginí, Histoire des Rois du Kachmir, par M. A. Troyer, LIB. I. ŚL. 166.). Dámodara, second of that name among the kings of Kashmír, was cursed by certain Bráhmans, and the malediction was to cease on the day on which he should hear the entire Rámáyan recited. Now Dámodara the Second, in the series of the kings of Kashmír, precedes by five kings Gonarda the Third who according to the computation of M. Troyer, the sagacious and learned translator and commentator of the History of Kashmír, is to be placed in the year 1182 before Christ (Rájataranginí, Tom. II. p. 375). Reckoning backward from this point to Dámodara the Second through an interval of five reigns the average duration of each of which is about twenty-four years, we arrive at the beginning of the fourteenth century before the Christian era. I am far from wishing to attribute any great precision to these chronological computations, nor do I pretend to determine exactly the age of the Rámáyan, but I maintain that from the passage of the Rájataranginí cited the remote antiquity

of the poem may with all confidence be inferred. This antiquity is confirmed by the various popular traditions diffused through the whole of India upon the epopea of Válmíki, upon the exploits which are celebrated in it, upon the principal actors in that great epic drama, since traditions and popular legends gather round ancient monuments as ivy and parasitical plants cling only to the trunks of aged oaks. The whole of India is full of such legends originated by the celebrity of the epic of Válmíki.—The fame of Ráma and of Hanumán his mighty ally, accompanied with popular legends, has penetrated into the most remote parts of the southern regions of India and even into Tibet. A proof of the antiquity of the Rámáyan is the fact that many poets both dramatic and epic have had recourse to the great fountain of his poem as the Grecian poets have drawn their materials from the epics of Homer. The antiquity of the Rámáyan is proved by the numerous various readings which are found in it and which can have arisen only from its antiquity and its diffusion by many mouths through distant regions. And as an epic poem is the faithful image of the creeds, the cult, the customs of the age in which it arose, so finding no mention of a creed, a cult, a custom, or a region in an epic is a very probable indication that it did not exist when the poem was composed. It is worthy of being remarked that in the Rámáyan no traces are found of that mystic devotion which absorbs all the faculties of man, of that passionate, ardent worship called *bhakti* which is not of the greatest antiquity but still must have sprung up before

our era, as it is mentioned in the Mahábhárata. There are indeed in the Rámáyan examples of prodigious austerities, but these have nothing to do with the religion called *bhakti*, and spring from another cause, a principle more profound. They appear to have been originated by an inner feeling, deeply rooted and of great antiquity in India, that is to say that expiation was to restore fallen human nature. Nor is there found in the Rámáyan any mention of Buddha or Buddhism, although other heterodox creeds are spoken of. Nor is the island of Ceylon against which the expedition of Ráma was directed called Taprobane or Támraparṇí, or Palesimundu or Pálisímanta, names anterior by some centuries to the Christian era. Nor is it even called by the name of Sinhala (Seat of Lions) which name is connected with the occupation of the island by Vijaya several centuries before our era. The name which Ceylon bears in the Rámáyan is always the primitive, the most ancient, Lanká. I could adduce many other conjectural proofs of the antiquity of the Rámáyan, such for instance as the nature of the style, and its qualifying, as Homer does, with such epithets as venerable, benign, divine, the night, the day, the woods, the mountains, and the rivers.

Colonel Sykes, in his dissertation inserted in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Vol. VII. pp. 248 ff.), finding that the celebrated Chinese Buddhist Fa Hian who visited India at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century after Christ makes no mention when in Ayodhyá, the capital of Ráma's kingdom, either

of Ráma or the Rámáyan, thinks it may be doubted whether the poem existed at that time. If there is no more reason than this to doubt the antiquity of the Rámáyan we need not be alarmed. In fact what did the Chinese Buddhist see in his long journey through India, what has he observed or described, except Buddhist monasteries, Buddhist temples, Buddhist priests, Buddhist traditions, Buddhist doctrines, Buddhist heterodoxies? Everything that had no connection with Buddhism either of agreement or opposition was neglected by him as out of the line of his object.

One apparent difficulty seems to result from the mention of the Yavanas which is found in the first Book of the Rámáyan. The name of Yavanas, used in India to indicate the Greeks after the time of Alexander, may in this place appear subject to suspicion. With regard to this see the excellent remarks of von Schlegel (Rámáyan, Vol. I. Part II. p. 168). The name of Yavanas may have been anciently used by the Indians to denote the nations situated to the west of India; more recently, that is after the time of Alexander, it was applied principally to the Greeks.'[1]

It is not to be expected that every one will admit the cogency of all the arguments in favour of the great antiquity of the Rámáyan adduced by the ingenious and enthusiastic scholar from whom I have quoted: but few who have read the poem will refuse to concur at least in the sober judgment of the writer of an excellent article on the Rámáyan in Vol. L. of the West-

[1] Gorresio, *Rámáyan, Vol. I. Introduction.*

minster Review: 'We are ignorant of the date of the poem, or rather of the era to which its older parts belong. Probably Válmíki and Homer were contemporaries; perhaps the Hindu was the earlier of the two, and sang his song while that Ilion was a reality, which to Homer rose in the back-ground of two or three generations. Our limits forbid us to enter into any detailed proof, nor indeed could any be quite satisfactory; the best arguments for its age are found in the poem itself, and the habits and manners which it describes. Thus the burning of widows on the funeral piles of their husbands, which the Greeks describe as an old custom when Alexander invaded India, B. C. 327, is utterly unknown in the Rámáyana, and one fact like this speaks volumes. In such poems as the Rámáyana and the Iliad we instinctively feel that they belong to the earlier world: we enter them as we enter a house in Pompeii—the colours may still seem fresh, and no mark of decay remind us of their age, but we feel that they belong not to us or ours, and a gulf of ages lies between us and our objects.'

The Rámáyan is divided into seven Books, but the action of the poem ends with the sixth, and there is every reason to believe that the seventh Book is a later addition. This last Book or Uttara Káṇḍa, 'contains various stories, legends, and traditions, which still have some connection of affinity with the principal poem. The mythical origin of the Rákshasas is there related ....with the banishment of Sítá and her giving birth in the hermitage of Válmíki to twin sons, Kuśa

and Lava, who were the first rhapsodists or 'aoidoi' of the Rámáyan, and other traditions and legends only distantly connected with the Rámáyan properly so called.'[1] The whole contains about 24,000 verses, chiefly ślokes or heroic distichs of thirty-two syllables each, with verses of a different metre occasionally introduced or interpolated, especially at the end of a canto.

'The poem has evidently undergone considerable alteration since the time of its first composition, but still underneath all the subsequent additions the original elements are preserved, and careful criticism might perhaps separate the interpolations and present the more genuine parts as a whole by themselves. The task however, would be difficult, and perhaps as impracticable as it has proved in the Homeric poems. For many ages it is certain that the work existed only by oral tradition, and each rhapsodist added or altered at his pleasure, or to suit the taste or vanity of the princely families whom he served. The measure of the poem, moreover, is of a somewhat fatal facility, and many rhapsodists would naturally be ambitious of mingling their own songs with those of their bards, and the habit of repetition would at once supply them with a vocabulary of epic phrases to suit their purpose. Whole chapters thus betray their origin by their barrenness of thought and laborious mimicry of the epic spirit, which in the case of the old poets had spontaneously burst out of the heart's fulness like the free song of a child. But when the Indian Pisistratus arose who collected these separate

[1] Gorresio.

songs and reduced them to their present shape, the genuine and spurious were alike included, and no Hindu critic ever appears to have attempted to discriminate between them. With regard to the Rámáyana it appears to have undergone two distinct revisions, one in Benares and the other in Bengal, and as the two were accomplished without any reference or relation to each other, they naturally present many varieties in their texts. The same thoughts and events are generally preserved in both, but the words and order of the verses continually differ, as would naturally be the case when the revisions were made from the oral traditions of two different schools of rhapsodists from each of which the poem had been undergoing a long series of alterations such as those we have suggested above.'[1]

Notwithstanding Gorresio's able and enthusiastic advocacy of what he considers the superior claims of the Bengal recension of the Rámáyan, it is generally allowed by European scholars that the Benares or North-West recension is the more genuine. Of the former there is a magnificent edition by Gorresio, published at the expense of Charles Albert, late King of Sardinia. The text is printed in a style that cannot be surpassed in any country, and an Italian prose translation of the whole accompanies it 'which may be equalled but not surpassed in any other of the languages of Europe. In his translation he has carefully preserved a Dantesque idiom and form of expression, free from all local patois; his rendering is most faithful, and his

[1] *Westminister Review, Vol. L.*

language elegant and spirited.'[1] The Benares recension has been less fortunate. In the years 1805—1810 Carey and Marshman, the venerable Missionaries of Serampore, published the text and English translation of two Books and a half or about one third of the entire poem,[2] but these volumes have long been out of print and unprocurable, and they 'are very inferior as productions of literary art, though no blame attaches to the excellent men who published their work in the very dawn of oriental studies.'[3] In the year 1846 the great William von Schlegel published the text of the first two Books with a Latin translation of the first and part of the second. This edition is to some extent an eclectic one ; it is founded on the North-West recension but sometimes admits passges from the Bengal recension when they are recommended by any special excellence. This work, as Gorresio justly says, 'bears the impress of that critical acumen, of that profound judgment, of that artistic sense, for which he is so renowned.' An admirable edition of the North-West recension with a

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[1] *Calcutta Review, Vol. XXIII. The Ramayana.*

[2] 'The gentlemen who compose the Committee (of the Asiatic Society of Bengal) have made choice of the Rámáyan of Válmíki to be the first in the series of translations from the Sanskrit. The reverence in which it is held, the extent of country through which it is circulated, and the interesting view which it exhibits of the religion, the doctrines, the mythology, the current ideas, and the manners and customs of the Hindus, combine to justify their election.' *Advertisement to Carey and Marshman's edition of the Rámáyan.*

[3] Gorresio says: 'With regard to the merits of this work I will add nothing to the severe but just judgment passed upon it by the illustrious William von Schlegel who found it a work without skill or critical discernment, abounding in faults and worthless in every part.'

commentary, has lately been lithographed at Bombay, and a rather inferior printed edition has been published in Calcutta. The late M. Hippolyte Fauche, the most intrepid and indefatigable of translators from the Sanskrit, has given to the world a French version of Gorresio's edition.[1] Thus the Bengal recension has been translated into Italian and French; but there is no English version of either recension, and only a small portion of the North-West recension has been translated into any European tongue. This fact alone will, I trust, be regarded as a sufficient reason or excuse for the present attempt to reproduce the Rámáyan in an English dress. The poem can hardly be denied a high place among the great epics of the world, and it is surely desirable that Englishmen—especially those who are more immediately connected with India—should at least be enabled, if they choose, to become acquainted with it.[2]

My first object has been to reproduce the original poem as faithfully as circumstances permit me to do. For this purpose I have preferred verse to prose. The translations of the Iliad by Chapman and Worsley—nay, even by translators of far inferior poetical powers—are, I think, much more Homeric than any literal prose rendering can possibly be. In the latter we may find the 'disjecti membra poetae,' but all the form and the life are gone, for 'the interpenetration of matter and manner constitute the very soul of poetry.' I have but seldom

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[1] One Canto, in the four versions, will be found in Appendix B.

[2] 'The Rámáyaṇa and Mahá-bhárata, unlike the Iliad and the Odyssey, are closely connected with the present religious faith of millions;

allowed myself to amplify or to condense, or omit apparently needless repetitions, but have attempted rather to give the poet as he is than to represent him as European taste might prefer him to be. Comparisons, therefore, which to English readers will appear vulgar or ridiculous have been left unaltered, and long passages of unutterable tediousness re-appear in my version with, probably, their tediousness enhanced. I may observe, with all respect for Válmíki, that the Rámáyan, even in the sonorous and dignified Sanskrit, will hardly bear reading through, and I am sure that the translation will not. Válmíki's work is not much read even in India, although the Hindí rifaccimento by the poet Tulsídás is more popular and more honoured by the people of the North-Western Provinces than the Bible is by the corresponding classes in England. The poem, it should be remembered, was in ancient times recited and not read;

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and these millions, be it remembered, acknowledge British sway, and have a right to expect the British public to take an interest in works which are the time-honoured repository of their legendary history and mythology, of their ancient customs and observances, as well as of their most cherished gems of poetry. It needs no argument to show that some knowledge of the two great Indian Epics ought to be required of all who hold office in India, whether in the Civil Service, or in any other capacity. Nor is it right, or even possible, for Englishmen generally to remain any longer wholly ignorant of the nature and contents of these poems. British India is now brought so close to us by steam and electricity, and the present condition of the Hindú community, social, political, and religions, forces itself so peremptorily on our attention, that the duty of studying the past history of our Eastern empire, so far as it can be collected from ancient Sanskrit literature, can no longer be evaded by educated men. Hitherto the Indian Epics, which, in the absence of all real history, are the only guides to the early condition of our Hindú fellow-subjects, have been sealed books to the majority of Englishmen.'

Indian Epic Poetry. By MONIER WILLIAMS, M. A., *Preface, III, IV.*

the audience that gathered round the rhapsodist might be continually changing, and each hearer would probably listen to a few consecutive cantos only. It is true that one unfortunate king mentioned in the Rájataranginí was condemned to remain under the malediction of the Bráhmans until he should have heard the whole Rámáyan recited at one sitting.[1] But it may be doubted which alternative he preferred; and this is quite an exceptional case.

The metre I have adopted has been chosen after long consideration and many experiments. It is not, I know, the exact equivalent of Válmíki's *śloka* or heroic distich, with which it cannot compare in gravity or grandeur. I would generally prefer other metres for free translations of short extracts or scenes from the poem, but for a translation of the entire work I am inclined to think that the octosyllabic metre fairly represents the original, and at the same time I find that it suits me best. The *śloka*, as I have already said, consists of two lines of sixteen syllables or, rather, four lines of eight syllables each, only four of which are fixed in quantity, the others being optionally long or short.[2] It corresponds then roughly

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[1] This reminds one of Macaulay's story of the Italian criminal 'who was suffered to choose between Guicciardini and the galleys. He chose the History. But the war of Pisa was too much for him. He changed his mind, and went to the oar.'

[2] 'This verse is a stanza or Śloka, which, with some exceptions, consists of two lines or hemistichs: each of these is again subdivided into two parts: so that the entire stanza is for the most part a tetrastich, composed of four Pádas or Charaṇas, literally 'feet,' or, in our understanding of the term, lines or semi hemístichs; the intervals between the first and second, and third and fourth of which are not always so distinctly marked, as that between the second and third..........

to four lines of the octosyllabic metre which will generally be found to reproduce it without, as a rule, either condensation or amplification. Blank verse, even if the translator could write it, would never represent the *śloka*, a verse generally commensurate with the sentence ; and a Sanskrit distich must either be condensed into one heroic couplet or expanded to fill two.

For the first two Books I translate from Schlegel's edition, and from the Bombay edition for the remaining portion of the poem.

The notes, necessarily brief and simple, I owe chiefly to Schlegel and Gorresio: I have also borrowed freely from Wilson, Lassen, Muir, Max Müller, Goldstücker,

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This is by far the most frequent and useful form of Sanskrit verse. It is that in which the great body of metrical composition, whether narrative or didactic, exists. All works of considerable extent are written in it, relieved by the occasional introduction of other metres. It is the prevailing form of metre in the laws of Manu, the Mahábhárata, the Rámáyaṇa, and the Purásas..........

Another rule given for the formation of the Anushṭup verse is, that the fifth syllable of each line shall be short, the sixth long and the seventh alternately long and short; whilst the first four syllables and the eighth are arbitrary. This will be found to be usually the form adopted, with occasional exceptions. The following are examples :—

ásídidam tamobhútamaprájnátamalakshanam
apratarkyamavijneyam prasuptamivasarvvatah

'This universse had become darkness, undiscerned, uncharacterised, indescribable, incomprehensible, as if everywhere in a deep sleep.' Manu.

má nisháda pratishṭhám twamagamah śásvatí samáh
yat kraunchamithunádekamabadhíh kámamohitam

'Never, barbarian, mayest thou acquire fame for endless years, since thou hast slain one of these birds, heedless through passion.' Rámáyana. Tradition affirms of this that it is the first Śloka or anushṭup verse ever composed.'

WILSON'S Sanskrit Grammar, p. 436.

and Professor Monier Williams. English readers will, I trust, remember that I write partly for Indians, and Indians that the notes which they may think superfluous are necessary to enable Europeans to understand the poem.

There are many archaisms in the original, and I have not entirely excluded them from my translation. My verses, I know, are frequently rough, prosaic, and dull, but I believe that any elaborate polish or the studied use of more modern poetical phraseology would only impair still further their likeness to the simple distichs of Válmíki.

Judged by a European standared there is but little true poetry in the first Book of the Rámáyan, and much of the aroma of that little has probably evaporated in the process of translation, Still, though fully aware of its many shortcomings, and only trusting that longer study, greater practice, and the lessons of intelligent criticism may make each succeeding volume less imperfect, I submit this first volume to the public with some confidence, as I am fully persuaded that the work when completed will supply a want which has long been felt in India if not in England.

I beg to offer my sincere thanks to the Governments of Bengal, the Punjab, Bombay, Mysore, the Central Provinces, and Oudh, for the liberal aid which, at the recommendation of the several Directors of Public Instruction, they have given to my undertaking; and more especially am I bound to render my best thanks to the

very distinguished oriental scholar at the head of the Government of the North-Western Provinces—those Provinces in which Válmíki composed his immortal poem, and in which this first metrical translation of it has been begun and will, I hope, be completed.

THE RÁMÁYAN.

INVOCATION.[1]

Praise to Válmíki,[2] bird of charming song,[3]
Who mounts on Poesy's sublimest spray,
And sweetly sings with accent clear and strong
Ráma, aye Ráma, in his deathless lay.

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[1] The MSS. vary very considerably in these stanzas of invocation: many lines are generally prefixed in which not only the poet, but those who play the chief parts in the poem are panegyrized. It is self-apparent that they are not by the author of the Rámáyan himself.

[2] 'Válmíki was the son of Varuṇa, the regent of the waters, one of whose names is Prachetas. According to the *Adhyátmá Rámáyaṇa*, the sage, although a Brahman by birth, associated with foresters and robbers. Attacking on one occasion the seven Rishis, they expostulated with him successfully, and taught him the *mantra* of Ráma reversed, or *Mará, Mará*, in the inaudible repetition of which he remained immovable for thousands of years, so that when the sages returned to the same spot they found him still there, converted into a *valmík* or ant-hill, by the nests of the termites, whence his name of Válmíki.'

WILSON. *Specimens of the Hindu Theatre, Vol. I. p.* 313.

'Válmíki is said to have lived a solitary life in the woods: he is called both a *muni* and a *rishi*. The former word properly signifies an anchorite or hermit; the latter has reference chiefly to wisdom. The two words are frequently used promiscuously, and may both be rendered by the Latin *vates* in its earliest meaning of *seer*: Válmíki was both poet and seer, as he is said to have sung the exploits of Ráma by the aid of divining insight rather than of knowledge naturally acquired.' SCHLEGEL.

[3] Literally, *Kokila*, the Koïl, or Indian Cuckoo. Schlegel translates 'luscinium.'

Where breathes the man can listen to the strain
That flows in music from Válmíki's tongue,
Nor feel his feet the path of bliss attain
When Ráma's glory by the saint is sung?

The stream Rámáyan leaves its sacred fount
The whole wide world from sin and stain to free.[1]
The Prince of Hermits is the parent mount,
The lordly Ráma is the darling sea.

Glory to him whose fame is ever bright!
Glory to him, Prachetas'[2] holy son!
Whose pure lips quaff with ever new delight
The nectar-sea of deeds by Ráma done.

Hail, arch-ascetic, pious, good, and kind!
Hail, Saint Válmíki, lord of every lore!
Hail, holy Hermit, calm and pure of mind!
Hail, First of Bards, Válmíki, hail once more!

---

[1] Comparison with the Ganges is implied, that river being called the purifier of the world.

[2] 'This name may have been given to the father of Válmíki allegorically. If we look at the derivation of the word (*pra*, before, and *chetas*, mind) it is as if the poet were called the son of Prometheus, the Fore-thinker.' SCHLEGEL.

BOOK I.[1]

CANTO I.

NÁRAD.[2]

OM.[3]

To sainted Nárad, prince of those
Whose lore in words of wisdom flows,
Whose constant care and chief delight
Were Scripture and ascetic rite,
The good Válmíki, first and best
Of hermit saints, these words addressed:[4]
'In all this world, I pray thee, who
Is virtuous, heroic, true?
Firm in his vows, of grateful mind,
To every creature good and kind?
Bounteous, and holy, just, and wise,
Alone most fair to all men's eyes?

---

[1] Called in Sanskrit also *Bála-Káṇḍa,* and in Hindí *Bál-Káṇḍ, i. e.* the Book describing Ráma's childhood, *bála* meaning a boy up to his sixteenth year.

[2] A divine saint, son of Brahmá, or Kaśyapa. He is the eloquent messenger of the Gods, a musician of exquisite skill, and the inventor of the *víṇá* or Indian lute. He bears a strong resemblance to Hermes or Mercury.

[3] This mystic syllable, said to typify the supreme Deity, the Gods collectively, the Vedas, the three spheres of the world, the three holy fires, the three steps of Vishṇu etc., prefaces the prayers and most venerated writings of the Hindus.

[4] This colloquy is supposed to have taken place about sixteen years after Ráma's return from his wanderings and occupation of his ancestral throne.

Devoid of envy, firm, and sage,
Whose tranquil soul ne'er yields to rage?
Whom, when his warrior wrath is high,
Do Gods embattled fear and fly?
Whose noble might and gentle skill
The triple world can guard from ill?
Who is the best of princes, he
Who loves his people's good to see?
The store of bliss, the living mine
Where brightest joys and virtues shine?
Queen Fortune's[1] best and dearest friend,
Whose steps her choicest gifts attend?
Who may with Sun and Moon compare,
With Indra,[2] Vishṇu,[3] Fire, and Air?
Grant, Saint divine,[4] the boon I ask,
For thee, I ween, an easy task,
To whom the power is given to know
If such a man breathe here below.'

Then Nárad, clear before whose eye
The present, past, and future lie,[5]

---

[1] Called also Śrí and Lakshmí, the consort of Vishṇu, the Queen of Beauty as well as the Dea Fortuna. Her birth 'from the full-flushed wave' is described in Canto XLV of this Book.

[2] One of the most prominent objects of worship in the Rig-veda, Indra was superseded in later times by the more popular deities Vishṇu and Śiva. He is the God of the firmament, and answers in may respects to the Jupiter Pluvius of the Romans. See *Additional Notes*.

[3] The second God of the Trimúrti or Indian Trinity. Derived from the root *viś* to penetrate, the meaning of the name appears to be *he who penetrates or pervades all things*. An embodiment of the preserving power of nature, he is worshipped as a Saviour who has nine times been incarnate for the good of the world and will descend on earth once more. See *Additional Notes* and Muir's Sanskrit Texts *passim*.

[4] In Sanskrit *devarshi*. *Rishi* is the general appellation of sages, and another word is frequently prefixed to distinguish the degrees. A *Brahmarshi* is a theologian or Bráhmanical sage; a Rájarshi is a royal sage or sainted king; a *Devarshi* is a divine or deified sage or saint.

[5] *Trikálajña*. Literally *knower of the three times*. Both Schlegel

Made ready answer: 'Hermit, where
Are graces found so high and rare?
Yet listen, and my tongue shall tell
In whom alone these virtues dwell.
From old Ikshváku's[1] line he came,
Known to the world by Ráma's name:
With soul subdued, a chief of might,
In Scripture versed, in glory bright.
His steps in virtue's paths are bent,
Obedient, pure, and eloquent.
In each emprise he wins success,
And dying foes his power confess.
Tall and broad-shouldered, strong of limb,
Fortune has set her mark on him.
Graced with a conch-shell's triple line,
His throat displays the auspicious sign.[2]

---

and Gorrresio quote Homer's

"Ος ᾔδη τά τ' ἐόντα, τά τ' ἐσσόμενα, πρό τ' ἐόντα.

'That sacred seer, whose comprehensive view
The past, the present, and the future knew.'

The Bombay edition reads *trilokajña*, *who knows the three worlds* (earth, air, and heaven.) 'It is by *tapas* (austere fervour) that rishis of subdued souls, subsisting on roots, fruits, and air, obtain a vision of the three worlds with all things moving and stationary.' MANU, XI. 236.

[1] Son of Manu, the first king of Kośala and founder of the solar dynasty or family of the Children of the Sun, the God of that luminary being the father of Manu.

[2] The Indians paid great attention to the art of physiognomy and believed that character and fortune could be foretold not from the face only but from marks upon the neck and hands. Three lines under the chin like those at the mouth of a conch (*Śankha*) were regarded as a peculiarly auspicious sign indicating, as did also the mark of Vishṇu's discus on the hand, one born to be a *chakravartin* or universal emperor. In the palmistry of Europe the line of fortune, as well as the line of life, is in the hand. Cardan says that marks on the nails and teeth also show what is to happen to us: 'Sunt etiam in nobis vestigia quædam futurorum eventuum in unguibus atque etiam

High destiny is clear impressed
On massive jaw and ample chest.
His mighty shafts he truly aims,
And foemen in the battle tames.
Deep in the muscle, scarcely shown,
Embedded lies his collar-bone.
His lordly steps are firm and free,
His strong arms reach below his knee;[3]
All fairest graces join to deck
His head, his brow, his stately neck,
And limbs in fair proportion set:
The manliest form e'er fashioned yet.
Graced with each high imperial mark,
His skin is soft and lustrous dark.
Large are his eyes that sweetly shine
With majesty almost divine.
His plighted word he ne'er forgets;
On erring sense a watch he sets.
By nature wise, his teacher's skill
Has trained him to subdue his will.
Good, resolute and pure, and strong,
He guards mankind from scathe and wrong,
And lends his aid, and ne'er in vain,
The cause of justice to maintain.
Well has he studied o'er and o'er
The Vedas[4] and their kindred lore.

---

in dentibus.' Though the palmy days of Indian chiromancy have passed away, the art is still to some extent studied and believed in.

[3] Long arms were regarded as a sign of heroic strength.

[4] 'Veda means originally knowing or knowledge, and this name is given by the Bráhmans not to one work, but to the whole body of their most ancient sacred literature. Veda is the same word which appears in the Greek οἶδα, I know, and in the English wise, wisdom, to wit. The name of Veda is commonly given to four collections of hymns, which are respectively know by the names of Rig-veda, Yajur-veda, Sáma-veda, and Atharva-veda.'

Well skilled is he the bow to draw,[1]
Well trained in arts and versed in law;
High-souled and meet for happy fate,
Most tender and compassionate;
The noblest of all lordly givers,
Whom good men follow, as the rivers
Follow the King of Floods, the sea:
So liberal, so just is he.
The joy of Queen Kauśalyá's[2] heart,
In every virtue he has part:
Firm as Himálaya's[3] snowy steep,
Unfathomed like the mighty deep;
The peer of Vishṇu's power and might,
And lovely as the Lord of Night;[4]
Patient as Earth, but, roused to ire,

'As the language of the Veda, the Sanskrit, is the most ancient type of the English of the present day, (Sanskrit and English are but varieties of one and the same language,) so its thoughts and feelings contain in reality the first roots and germs of that intellectual growth which by an unbroken chain connects our own generation with the ancestors of the Aryan race,—with those very people who at the rising and setting of the sun listened with trembling hearts to the songs of the Veda, that told them of bright powers above, and of a life to come after the sun of their own lives had set in the clouds of the evening. These men were the true ancestors of our race, and the Veda is the oldest book we have in which to study the first beginnings of our language, and of all that is embodied in language. We are by nature Aryan, Indo-European, not Semitic: our spiritual kith and kin are to be found in India, Persia, Greece, Italy, Germany; not in Mesopotamia, Egypt, or Palestine.'

Chips from a German Workshop, Vol. I. pp. 3, 4.

[1] As with the ancient Persians and Scythians, Indian princes were carefully instructed in archery which stands for military science in general, of which, among Hindu heroes, it was the most important branch.

[2] Chief of the three queens of Daśaratha and mother of Ráma.

[3] From *hima* snow, (Greek χειμ-ών Latin hiems) and *álaya* abode; the Mansion of Snow.

[4] The moon *(Soma, Indu, Chandra etc.)* is masculine with the Indians as with the Germans.

Fierce as the world-destroying fire;
In bounty like the Lord of Gold,[1]
And Justice' self in human mould.

With him, his best and eldest son,
By all his princely virtues won
King Daśaratha[2] willed to share
His kingdom as the Regent Heir.
But when Kaikeyí, youngest queen,
With eyes of envious hate had seen
The solemn pomp and regal state
Prepared the prince to consecrate,
She bade the hapless king bestow
Two gifts he promised long ago,
That Ráma to the woods should flee,
And that her child the heir should be.

By chains of duty firmly tied,
The wretched king perforce complied.
Ráma, to please Kaikeyí went
Obedient forth to banishment.
Then Lakshman's truth was nobly shown,
Then were his love and courage known,
When for his brother's sake he dared
All perils, and his exile shared.
And Sítá, Ráma's darling wife,
Loved even as he loved his life,
Whom happy marks combined to bless,
A miracle of loveliness,
Of Janak's royal lineage sprung,
Most excellent of women, clung

---

[1] Kuvera, the Indan Plutus, or God of Wealth.

[2] The events here briefly mentioned will be related fully in the course of the poem. The first four cantos are introductory, and are evidently the work of a later hand than Válmíki's.

To her dear lord, like Rohiṇí
Rejoicing with the Moon to be.[1]
The king and people, sad of mood,
The hero's car awhile pursued.
But when Prince Ráma lighted down
At Śringavera's pleasant town,
Where Gangá's holy waters flow,
He bade his driver turn and go.
Guha, Nishádas' king, he met,
And on the farther bank was set.
Then on from wood to wood they strayed,
O'er many a stream, through constant shade,
As Bharadvája bade them, till
They came to Chitrakúṭa's hill.
And Ráma there, with Lakshmaṇ's aid,
A pleasant little cottage made,
And spent his days with Sítá, dressed

---

[1] 'Chandra, or the Moon, is fabled to have been married to the twenty-seven daughters of the patriarch Daksha, or Aśviní and the rest, who are in fact personifications of the Lunar Asterisms. His favourite amongst them was Rohiṇí to whom he so wholly devoted himself as to neglect the rest. They complained to their father, and Daksha repeatedly interposed, till, finding his remonstrances vain, he denounced a curse upon his son-in-law, in consequence of which he remained childless and became affected by consumption. The wives of Chandra having interceded in his behalf with their father, Daksha modified an imprecation which he could not recall, and pronounced that the decay should be periodical only, not permanent, and that it should alternate with periods of recovery. Hence the successive wane and increase of the Moon. *Padma Puráṇa, Swarga-Khaṇḍa*, Sec. II. *Rohiṇí* in Astronomy is the fourth lunar mansion, containing five stars, the principal of which is Aldebaran.'

WILSON, *Specimens of the Hindu Theatre. Vol. I. p.* 234.

The Bengal recension has a different reading:

'Shone with her husband like the light
Attendant on the Lord of Night.'

In coat of bark and deerskin vest.[1]
And Chitrakúṭa grew to be
As bright with those illustrious three
As Meru's[2] sacred peaks that shine
With glory, when the Gods recline
Beneath them: Śiva's[3] self between
The Lord of Gold and Beauty's Queen.

The aged king for Ráma pined,
And for the skies the earth resigned.
Bharat, his son, refused to reign,
Though urged by all the twice-born[4] train.
Forth to the woods he fared to meet
His brother, fell before his feet,
And cried, 'Thy claim all men allow:
O come, our lord and king be thou.'
But Ráma nobly chose to be
Observant of his sire's decree.
He placed his sandals[5] in his hand,
A pledge that he would rule the land:

---

[1] The garb prescribed for ascetics by Manu.

[2] 'Mount Meru, situated like Kailása in the lofty regions to the north of the Himálayas, is celebrated in the traditions and myths of India. Meru and Kailása are the two Indian Olympi. Perhaps they were held in such veneration because the Sanskrit-speaking Indians remembered the ancient home where they dwelt with the other primitive peoples of their family before they descended to occupy the vast plains which extend between the Indus and the Ganges.' GORRESIO.

[3] The third God of the Indian Triad, the God of destruction and reproduction. See *Additional Notes.*

[4] The epithet *dwija*, or *twice-born*, is usually appropriated to Bráhmans, but is applicable to the three higher castes. Investiture with the sacred thread and initiation of the neophyte into certain religious mysteries are regarded as his regeneration or second birth.

[5] His shoes, to be a memorial of the absent heir and to maintain his right. Kálidása (Raghuvanśa, XII. 17.) says that they were to be *adhidevatæ* or guardian deities of the kingdom.

And bade his brother turn again.
Then Bharat, finding prayer was vain,
The sandals took and went away;
Nor in Ayodhyá would he stay,
But turned to Nandigráma, where
He ruled the realm with watchful care,
Still longing eagerly to learn
Tidings of Ráma's safe return.

Then lest the people should repeat
Their visit to his calm retreat,
Away from Chitrakúṭa's hill
Fared Ráma ever onward till
Beneath the shady trees he stood
Of Daṇḍaká's primeval wood.
Virádha, giant fiend, he slew,
And then Agastya's friendship knew.
Counselled by him he gained the sword
And bow of Indra, heavenly lord:
A pair of quivers too, that bore
Of arrows an exhaustless store.
While there he dwelt in greenwood shade,
The trembling hermits sought his aid,
And bade him with his sword and bow
Destroy the fiends who worked them woe:
To come like Indra strong and brave,
A guardian God to help and save.
And Ráma's falchion left its trace
Deep cut on Śúrpaṇakhá's face:
A hideous giantess who came
Burning for him with lawless flame.
Their sister's cries the giants heard,
And vengeance in each bosom stirred:
The monster of the triple head,
And Dúshaṇ to the contest sped.

But they and myriad fiends beside
Beneath the might of Ráma died.

When Rávaṇ, dreaded warrior, knew
The slaughter of his giant crew:
Rávaṇ, the king, whose name of fear
Earth, hell, and heaven all shook to hear:
He bade the fiend Márícha aid
The vengeful plot his fury laid.
In vain the wise Márícha tried
To turn him from his course aside:
Not Rávaṇ's self, he said, might hope
With Ráma and his strength to cope.
Impelled by fate and blind with rage
He came to Ráma's hermitage.
There, by Márícha's magic art,
He wiled the princely youths apart,
The vulture[1] slew, and bore away
The wife of Ráma as his prey.
The son of Raghu[2] came and found
Jaṭáyu slain upon the ground.
He rushed within his leafy cot;
He sought his wife, but found her not.
Then, then the hero's senses failed;
In mad despair he wept and wailed.
Upon the pile that bird he laid,
And still in quest of Sítá strayed.
A hideous giant then he saw,
Kabandha named, a shape of awe.

---

[1] Jaṭáyu, a semi-divine bird, the friend of Ráma, who fought in defence of Sítá.

[2] Raghu was one of the most celebrated ancestors of Ráma whose commonest appellation is, therefore, Rághava or descendant of Raghu. Kálidása in the *Raghuvanśa* makes him the son of Dilípa and great-grandfather of Ráma. See *Idylls from the Sanskrit*, 'Aja' and 'Dilípa.'

The monstrous fiend he smote and slew,
And in the flame the body threw;
When straight from out the funeral flame
In lovely form Kabandha came,
And bade him seek in his distress
A wise and holy hermitess.
By counsel of this saintly dame
To Pampá's pleasant flood he came,
And there the steadfast friendship won
Of Hanumán the Wind-God's son.
Counselled by him he told his grief
To great Sugríva, Vánar chief,
Who, knowing all the tale, before
The sacred flame alliance swore.
Sugríva to his new-found friend
Told his own story to the end:
His hate of Báli for the wrong
And insult he had borne so long.
And Ráma lent a willing ear
And promised to allay his fear.
Sugríva warned him of the might
Of Báli, matchless in the fight,
And, credence for his tale to gain,
Showed the huge fiend[1] by Báli slain.
The prostrate corse of mountain size
Seemed nothing in the hero's eyes;
He lightly kicked it, as it lay,
And cast it twenty leagues[2] away.
To prove his might his arrows through
Seven palms in line, uninjured, flew.
He cleft a mighty hill apart,

---

[1] Dundhubi.

[2] Literally *ten yojanas*. The *yojana* is a measure of uncertain length variously reckoned as equal to nine miles, five, and a little less.

And down to hell he hurled his dart.
Then high Sugríva's spirit rose,
Assured of conquest o'er his foes.
With his new champion by his side
To vast Kishkindhá's cave he hied.
Then, summoned by his awful shout,
King Báli came in fury out,
First comforted his trembling wife,
Then sought Sugríva in the strife.
One shaft from Ráma's deadly bow
The monarch in the dust laid low.
Then Ráma bade Sugríva reign
In place of royal Báli slain.
Then speedy envoys hurried forth
Eastward and westward, south and north,
Commanded by the grateful king
Tidings of Ráma's spouse to bring.

Then by Sampáti's counsel led,
Brave Hanumán, who mocked at dread,
Sprang at one wild tremendous leap
Two hundred leagues across the deep.
To Lanká's[1] town he urged his way,
Where Rávaṇ held his royal sway.
There pensive 'neath Aśoka[2] boughs
He found poor Sítá, Ráma's spouse.
He gave the hapless girl a ring,
A token from her lord and king.
A pledge from her fair hand he bore;
Then battered down the garden door.
Five captains of the host he slew,
Seven sons of councillors o'erthrew;

[1] Ceylon.

[2] The Jonesia Aśoka is a most beautiful tree bearing a profusion of red blossoms.

Crushed youthful Aksha on the field,
Then to his captors chose to yield.
Soon from their bonds his limbs were free,
But honouring the high decree
Which Brahmá[1] had pronounced of yore,
He calmly all their insults bore.
The town he burnt with hostile flame,
And spoke again with Ráma's dame,
Then swiftly back to Ráma flew
With tidings of the interview.

Then with Sugríva for his guide,
Came Ráma to the ocean side.
He smote the sea with shafts as bright
As sunbeams in their summer height,
And quick appeared the Rivers' King[2]
Obedient to the summoning.
A bridge was thrown by Nala o'er
The narrow sea from shore to shore.[3]
They crossed to Lanká's golden town,
Where Ráma's hand smote Rávaṇ down.
Vibhíshaṇ there was left to reign
Over his brother's wide domain.
To meet her husband Sítá came;
But Ráma, stung with ire and shame,
With bitter words his wife addressed
Before the crowd that round her pressed.

---

[1] *Brahmá*, the Creator, is usually regarded as the first God of the Indian Trinity, although, as Kálidása says:

'Of Brahmá, Vishṇu, Śiva, each may be
First, second, third, amid the blessed Three.'

Brahmá had guaranteed Rávaṇ's life against all enemies except man.

[2] Ocean personified.

[3] The rocks lying between Ceylon and the mainland are still called Ráma's Bridge by the Hindus.

But Sítá, touched with noble ire,
Gave her fair body to the fire.
Then straight the God of Wind appeared,
And words from heaven her honour cleared.
And Ráma clasped his wife again,
Uninjured, pure from spot and stain,
Obedient to the Lord of Fire
And the high mandate of his sire.
Led by the Lord who rules the sky,
The Gods and heavenly saints drew nigh,
And honoured him with worthy meed,
Rejoicing in each glorious deed.
His task achieved, his foe removed,
He triumphed, by the Gods approved.
By grace of Heaven he raised to life
The chieftains slain in mortal strife;
Then in the magic chariot through
The clouds to Nandigráma flew.
Met by his faithful brothers there,
He loosed his votive coil of hair;
Thence fair Ayodhyá's town he gained,
And o'er his father's kingdom reigned.
Disease or famine ne'er oppressed
His happy people, richly blest
With all the joys of ample wealth,
Of sweet content and perfect health.
No widow mourned her well-loved mate,
No sire his son's untimely fate.
They feared not storm or robber's hand:
No fire or flood laid waste the land:
The Golden Age[1] seemed come again
To bless the days of Ráma's reign.

---

[1] 'The Bráhmans, with a system rather cosmogonical than chronological, divide the present mundane period into four ages or *yugas* as they

From him, the great and glorious king,
Shall many a princely scion spring.
And he shall rule, beloved by men,
Ten thousand years and hundreds ten,[1]
And when his life on earth is past
To Brahmá's world shall go at last.'

Whoe'er this noble poem reads
That tells the tale of Ráma's deeds,
Good as the Scriptures, he shall be
From every sin and blemish free.
Whoever reads the saving strain,
With all his kin the heavens shall gain.
Bráhmans who read shall gather hence
The highest praise for eloquence.
The warrior, o'er the land shall reign,
The merchant, luck in trade obtain;
And Śúdras listening[2] ne'er shall fail
To reap advantage from the tale.[3]

---

call them: the Krita, the Tretá, the Dwápara, and the Kali. The Krita, called also the Devayuga or that of the Gods, is the age of truth, the perfect age, the Tretá is the age of the three sacred fires, domestic and sacrificial; the Dwápara is the age of doubt; the Kali, the present age, is the age of evil.' GORRESIO.

[1] The ancient kings of India enjoyed lives of more than patriarchal length as will appear in the course of the poem.

[2] Śúdras, men of the fourth and lowest pure caste, were not allowed to read the poem, but might hear it recited.

[3] The three *ślokes* or distichs which these twelve lines represent are evidently a still later and very awkward addition to the introduction.

CANTO II.

BRAHMÁ'S VISIT.

Válmíki, graceful speaker, heard,
To highest admiration stirred.
To him whose fame the tale rehearsed
He paid his mental worship first;
Then with his pupil humbly bent
Before the saint most eloquent.
Thus honoured and dismissed the seer
Departed to his heavenly sphere.
Then from his cot Válmíki hied
To Tamasá's[1] sequestered side,
Not far remote from Gangá's tide.
He stood and saw the ripples roll
Pellucid o'er a pebbly shoal.
To Bharadvája[2] by his side
He turned in ecstasy, and cried:
'See, pupil dear, this lovely sight,
The smooth-floored shallow, pure and bright,
With not a speck or shade to mar,
And clear as good men's bosoms are.
Here on the brink thy pitcher lay,
And bring my zone of bark, I pray.

---

[1] There are several rivers in India of this name, now corrupted into *Tonse*. The river here spoken of is that which falls into the Ganges a little below Allahabad.

[2] 'In Book II., Canto LIV., we meet with a saint of this name presiding over a convent of disciples in his hermitage at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna. Thence the later author of these introductory cantos has borrowed the name and person, inconsistently indeed, but with the intention of enhancing the dignity of the poet by ascribing to him so celebrated a disciple.' SCHLEGEL.

Here will I bathe: the rill has not,
To lave the limbs, a fairer spot.
Do quickly as I bid, nor waste
The precious time; away, and haste.'

Obedient to his master's hest
Quick from the cot he brought the vest;
The hermit took it from his hand,
And tightened round his waist the band;
Then duly dipped and bathed him there,
And muttered low his secret prayer.
To spirits and to Gods he made
Libation of the stream, and strayed
Viewing the forest deep and wide
That spread its shade on every side.
Close by the bank he saw a pair
Of curlews sporting fearless there.
But suddenly with evil mind
An outcast fowler stole behind,
And, with an aim too sure and true,
The male bird near the hermit slew.
The wretched hen in wild despair
With fluttering pinions beat the air,
And shrieked a long and bitter cry
When low on earth she saw him lie,
Her loved companion, quivering, dead,
His dear wings with his lifeblood red;
And for her golden-crested mate
She mourned, and was disconsolate.

The hermit saw the slaughtered bird,
And all his heart with ruth was stirred.
The fowler's impious deed distressed
His gentle sympathetic breast,
And while the curlew's sad cries rang
Within his ears, the hermit sang:

'No fame be thine for endless time,
Because, base outcast, of thy crime,
Whose cruel hand was fain to slay
One of this gentle pair at play!'
E'en as he spoke his bosom wrought
And laboured with the wondering thought
What was the speech his ready tongue
Had uttered when his heart was wrung.
He pondered long upon the speech,
Recalled the words and measured each,
And thus exclaimed the saintly guide
To Bharadvája by his side:
'With equal lines of even feet,
With rhythm and time and tone complete,
The measured form of words I spoke
In shock of grief be termed a śloke.[1]'
And Bharadvája, nothing slow
His faithful love and zeal to show,
Answered those words of wisdom, 'Be
The name, my lord, as pleases thee.'

As rules prescribe the hermit took
Some lustral water from the brook.
But still on this his constant thought
Kept brooding, as his home he sought;
While Bharadvája paced behind,
A pupil sage of lowly mind,
And in his hand a pitcher bore
With pure fresh water brimming o'er.
Soon as they reached their calm retreat
The holy hermit took his seat;

---

[1] The poet plays upon the similarity in sound of the two words: *śoka* means grief, *śloka*, the heroic measure in which the poem is composed. It need scarcely be said that the derivation is fanciful.

His mind from worldly cares recalled,
And mused in deepest thought enthralled.

Then glorious Brahmá,[1] Lord Most High,
Creator of the earth and sky,
The four-faced God, to meet the sage
Came to Válmíki's hermitage.
Soon as the mighty God he saw,
Up sprang the saint in wondering awe.
Mute, with clasped hands, his head he bent,
And stood before him reverent.
His honoured guest he greeted well,
Who bade him of his welfare tell;
Gave water for his blessed feet,
Brought offerings,[2] and prepared a seat.
In honoured place the God Most High
Sate down, and bade the saint sit nigh.
There sate before Válmíki's eyes
The Father of the earth and skies;
But still the hermit's thoughts were bent
On one thing only, all intent
On that poor curlew's mournful fate
Lamenting for her slaughtered mate;

---

[1] Brahmá, the Creator, is usually regarded as the first person of the divine triad of India. The four heads with which he is represented are supposed to have allusion to the four corners of the earth which he is sometimes considered to personify. As an object of adoration Brahmá has been entirely superseded by Śiva and Vishṇu. In the whole of India there is, I believe, but one temple dedicated to his worship. In this point the first of the Indian triad curiously resembles the last of the divine fraternity of Greece, Aïdes the brother of Zeus and Poseidon. 'In all Greece, says Pausanias, there is no single temple of Aïdes, except at a single spot in Elis.' See Gladstone's Juventus Mundi, p. 253.

[2] The *argha* or *arghya* was a libation or offering to a deity, a Bráhman, or other venerable personage. According to one authority it consisted of water, milk, the points of Kuśa-grass, curds, clarified butter, rice, barley, and white mustard; according to another, of saffron, bel, unbroken grain, flowers, curds, dúrbá-grass, kuśa-grass, and sesamum.

And still his lips, in absent mood,
The verse that told his grief renewed:
'Woe to the fowler's impious hand
That did the deed that folly planned;
That could to needless death devote
The curlew of the tuneful throat!'

The heavenly Father smiled in glee,
And said, 'O best of hermits, see,
A verse, unconscious, thou hast made;
No longer be the task delayed.
Seek not to trace, with labour vain,
The unpremeditated strain.
The tuneful lines thy lips rehearsed
Spontaneous from thy bosom burst.
Then come, O best of seers, relate
The life of Ráma good and great.
The tale that saintly Nárad told,
In all its glorious length unfold.
Of all the deeds his arm has done
Upon this earth, omit not one,
And thus the noble life record
Of that wise, brave, and virtuous lord.
His every act to day displayed,
His secret life to none betrayed:
How Lakshman, how the giants fought;
With high emprise and hidden thought:
And all that Janak's child[1] befell
Where all could see, where none could tell.
The whole of this shall truly be
Made known, O best of saints, to thee.
In all thy poem, through my grace,
No word of falsehood shall have place.
Begin the story, and rehearse

[1] Sítá, daughter of Janak king of Mithilá.

The tale divine in charming verse.
As long as in this firm-set land
The streams shall flow, the mountains stand,
So long throughout the world, be sure,
The great Rámáyan shall endure.[1]
While the Rámáyan's ancient strain
Shall glorious in the earth remain,
To higher spheres shalt thou arise
And dwell with me above the skies.'

He spoke, and vanished into air,
And left Válmíki wondering there.
The pupils of the holy man,
Moved by their love of him, began
To chant that verse, and ever more
They marvelled as they sang it o'er:
'Behold, the four-lined balanced rime,
Repeated over many a time,
In words that from the hermit broke
In shock of grief, becomes a śloke.'
This measure now Válmíki chose
Wherein his story to compose.
In hundreds of such verses, sweet
With equal lines and even feet,
The saintly poet, lofty-souled,
The glorious deeds of Ráma told.

---

[1] 'I congratulate myself,' says Schlegel in the preface to his, alas, unfinished edition of the Rámáyan, 'that, by the favour of the Supreme Deity, I have been allowed to begin so great a work; I glory and make my boast that I too after so many ages have helped to confirm that ancient oracle declared to Válmíki by the Father of Gods and men:

Dum stabunt montes, campis dum flumina current,
Usque tuum toto carmen celebrabitur orbe.'

CANTO III.

THE ARGUMENT.

The hermit thus with watchful heed
Received the poem's pregnant seed,
And looked with eager thought around
If fuller knowledge might be found.
His lips with water first bedewed,[1]
He sate in reverent attitude
On holy grass,[2] the points all bent
Together toward the orient;[3]
And thus in meditation he
Entered the path of poesy.
Then clearly, through his virtue's might,
All lay discovered to his sight,
Whate'er befell, through all their life,
Ráma, his brother, and his wife:
And Daśaratha and each queen
At every time, in every scene:
His people too, of every sort;
The nobles of his princely court:
Whate'er was said, whate'er decreed,
Each time they sate, each plan and deed:
For holy thought and fervent rite

---

[1] 'The sipping of water is a requisite introduction of all rites: without it, says the Sámba Purána, all acts of religion are vain.'

COLEBROOKE.

[2] The *darbha* or *kuśa* (Poa cynosuroides), a kind of grass used in sacrifice by the Hindus as *verbena* was by the Romans.

[3] The direction in which the grass should be placed upon the ground as a seat for the Gods, on occasion of offerings made to them.

Had so refined his keener sight
That by his sanctity his view
The present, past, and future knew,
And he with mental eye could grasp,
Like fruit within his fingers' clasp,
The life of Ráma, great and good,
Roaming with Sítá in the wood.
He told, with secret-piercing eyes,
The tale of Ráma's high emprise,
Each listening ear that shall entice,
A sea of pearls of highest price.
Thus good Válmíki, sage divine,
Rehearsed the tale of Raghu's line,
As Nárad, heavenly saint, before
Had traced the story's outline o'er.
He sang of Ráma's princely birth,
His kindness and heroic worth;
His love for all, his patient youth,
His gentleness and constant truth,
And many a tale and legend old
By holy Viśvámitra told.
How Janak's child he wooed and won,
And broke the bow that bent to none.
How he with every virtue fraught
His namesake Ráma[1] met and fought.
The choice of Ráma for the throne;
The malice by Kaikeyí shown,
Whose evil counsel marred the plan
And drove him forth a banisht man.
How the king grieved and groaned, and cried,
And swooned away and pining died.
The subjects' woe when thus bereft;
And how the following crowds he left:

---

[1] Paraśuráma or Ráma with the Axe. See Canto LXXIV.

With Guha talked, and firmly stern
Ordered his driver to return.
How Gangá's farther shore he gained;
By Bharadvája entertained,
By whose advice he journeyed still
And came to Chitrakúṭa's hill.
How there he dwelt and built a cot;
How Bharat journeyed to the spot;
His earnest supplication made;
Drink-offerings to their father paid;
The sandals given by Ráma's hand,
As emblems of his right, to stand:
How from his presence Bharat went
And years in Nandigráma spent.
How Ráma entered Daṇḍak wood
And in Sutíkshṇa's presence stood.
The favour Anasúyá showed,
The wondrous balsam she bestowed.
How Śarabhanga's dwelling-place
They sought; saw Indra face to face;
The meeting with Agastya gained;
The heavenly bow from him obtained.
How Ráma with Virádha met;
Their home in Panchavaṭa set.
How Śúrpaṇakhá underwent
The mockery and disfigurement.
Of Triśirá's and Khara's fall,
Of Rávaṇ roused at vengeance' call.
Márícha doomed, without escape;
The fair Videhan[1] lady's rape.
How Ráma wept and raved in vain,
And how the Vulture-king was slain.

---

[1] Sítá. Videha was the country of which Mithilá was the capital.

How Ráma fierce Kabandha slew;
Then to the side of Pampá drew,
Met Hanumán, and her whose vows
Were kept beneath the greenwood boughs.
How Raghu's son, the lofty-souled,
On Pampá's bank wept uncontrolled,
Then journeyed, Rishyamúk to reach,
And of Sugríva then had speech.
The friendship made, which both had sought;
How Báli and Sugríva fought.
How Báli in the strife was slain,
And how Sugríva came to reign.
The treaty, Tárá's wild lament;
The rainy nights in watching spent.
The wrath of Raghu's lion son;
The gathering of the hosts in one.
The sending of the spies about,
And all the regions pointed out.
The ring by Ráma's hand bestowed;
The cave wherein the bear abode.
The fast proposed, their lives to end;
Sampáti gained to be their friend.
The scaling of the hill, the leap
Of Hanumán across the deep.
Ocean's command that bade them seek
Maináka of the lofty peak.
The death of Sinhiká, the sight
Of Lanká with her palace bright.
How Hanumán stole in at eve;
His plan the giants to deceive.
How through the square he made his way
To chambers where the women lay,
Within the Aśoka garden came
And there found Ráma's captive dame.

His colloquy with her he sought,
And giving of the ring he brought.
How Sítá gave a gem o'erjoyed;
How Hanumán the grove destroyed.
How giantesses trembling fled,
And servant fiends were smitten dead.
How Hanumán was seized; their ire
When Lanká blazed with hostile fire.
His leap across the sea once more;
The eating of the honey store.
How Ráma he consoled, and how
He showed the gem from Sítá's brow.
With Ocean, Ráma's interview;
The bridge that Nala o'er it threw,
The crossing, and the sitting down
At night round Lanká's royal town.
The treaty with Vibhíshaṇ made;
The plan for Rávaṇ's slaughter laid.
How Kumbhakarṇa in his pride
And Meghanáda fought and died.
How Rávaṇ in the fight was slain,
And captive Sítá brought again.
Vibhíshaṇ set upon the throne;
The flying chariot Pushpak shown.
How Brahmá and the Gods appeared,
And Sítá's doubted honour cleared.
How in the flying car they rode
To Bharadvája's calm abode.
The Wind-God's son sent on afar;
How Bharat met the flying car.
How Ráma then was king ordained;
The legions their discharge obtained.
How Ráma cast his queen away;
How grew the people's love each day.

Thus did the saint Válmíki tell
Whate'er in Ráma's life befell,
And in the closing verses all
That yet to come will once befall.

CANTO IV.

THE RHAPSODISTS.

When to the end the tale was brought,
Rose in the sage's mind the thought:
'Now who throughout this earth will go,
And tell it forth that all may know?'
As thus he mused with anxious breast,
Behold, in hermit's raiment dressed,
Kuśa and Lava[1] came to greet
Their master and embrace his feet.
The twins he saw, that princely pair
Sweet-voiced, who dwelt beside him there.
None for the task could be more fit,
For skilled were they in Holy Writ;
And so the great Rámáyan, fraught
With lore divine, to these he taught:
The lay whose verses sweet and clear
Take with delight the listening ear,
That tell of Sítá's noble life
And Rávaṇ's fall in battle strife.
Great joy to all who hear they bring,
Sweet to recite and sweet to sing.
For music's sevenfold notes are there,
And triple measure,[2] wrought with care,

---

[1] The twin sons of Ráma and Sítá, born after Ráma had repudiated Sítá, and brought up in the hermitage of Válmíki. As they were the first rhapsodists the combined name Kuśílava signifies a reciter of poems, or an improvvisatore, even to the present day.

[2] Perhaps the bass, tenor, and treble, or quick, slow, and middle time. We know but little of the ancient music of the Hindus.

With melody and tone and time,
And flavours[1] that enhance the rime:
Heroic might has ample place,
And loathing of the false and base,
With anger, mirth, and terror, blent
With tenderness, surprise, content.
When, half the hermit's grace to gain,
And half because they loved the strain,
The youths within their hearts had stored
The poem that his lips outpoured,
Válmíki kissed them on the head,
As at his feet they bowed, and said:
'Recite ye this heroic song
In tranquil shades where sages throng:
Recite it where the good resort,
In lowly home and royal court.'

The hermit ceased. The tuneful pair,
Like heavenly minstrels sweet and fair,
In music's art divinely skilled,
Their saintly master's word fulfilled.
Like Ráma's self, from whom they came,
They showed their sire in face and frame,
As though from some fair sculptured stone
Two selfsame images had grown.
Sometimes the pair rose up to sing,
Surrounded by a holy ring,
Where seated on the grass had met
Full many a musing anchoret.
Then tears bedimmed those gentle eyes,

---

[1] 'Eight flavours or sentiments are usually enumerated, love, mirth, tenderness, anger, heroism, terror, disgust, and surprise: tranquillity or content, or paternal tenderness, is sometimes considered as the ninth.' Wilson. See the *Sáhitya Darpaṇa*, or *Mirror of Composition*, translated by Dr. Ballantyne and Bábú Pramadádása Mittra in the *Bibliotheca Indica*.

As transport took them and surprise,
And as they listened every one
Cried in delight, Well done! Well done!
Those sages versed in holy lore
Praised the sweet minstrels more and more:
And wondered at the singers' skill,
And the bard's verses sweeter still,
Which laid so clear before the eye
The glorious deeds of days gone by.
Thus by the virtuous hermits praised,
Inspirited their voice they raised.
Pleased with the song this holy man
Would give the youths a water-can;
One gave a fair ascetic dress,
Or sweet fruit from the wilderness.
One saint a black-deer's hide would bring,
And one a sacrificial string:
One, a clay pitcher from his hoard,
And one, a twisted munja cord.[1]
One in his joy an axe would find,
One, braid, their plaited locks to bind.
One gave a sacrificial cup,
One rope to tie their fagots up;
While fuel at their feet was laid,
Or hermit's stool of fig-tree made.
All gave, or if they gave not, none
Forgot at least a benison.
Some saints, delighted with their lays,
Would promise health and length of days:
Others with surest words would add
Some boon to make their spirit glad.

---

[1] Saccharum Munja is a plant from whose fibres is twisted the sacred string which a Bráhman wears over one shoulder after he has been initiated by a rite which in some respects answers to confirmation.

In such degree of honour then
That song was held by holy men:
That living song which life can give,
By which shall many a minstrel live.
In seat of kings, in crowded hall,
They sang the poem, praised of all.
And Ráma chanced to hear their lay,
While he the votive steed[2] would slay,
And sent fit messengers to bring
The minstrel pair before the king.
They came, and found the monarch high
Enthroned in gold, his brothers nigh;
While many a minister below,
And noble, sate in lengthened row.
The youthful pair awhile he viewed
Graceful in modest attitude,
And then in words like these addressed
His brother Lakshmaṇ and the rest:
'Come, listen to the wondrous strain
Recited by these godlike twain,
Sweet singers of a story fraught
With melody and lofty thought.'

The pair, with voices sweet and strong,
Rolled the full tide of noble song,
With tone and accent deftly blent
To suit the changing argument.
Mid that assembly loud and clear
Rang forth that lay so sweet to hear,
That universal rapture stole
Through each man's frame and heart and sou..
'These minstrels, blest with every sign
That marks a high and princely line,

---

[2] A description of an Aśvamedha or Horse Sacrifice is given in Canto XIII. of this Book.

In holy shades who dwell,
Enshrined in Saint Válmíki's lay,
A monument to live for aye,
My deeds in song shall tell.'
Thus Ráma spoke: their breasts were fired,
And the great tale, as if inspired,
The youths began to sing,
While every heart with transport swelled,
And mute and rapt attention held
The concourse and the king.

CANTO V.

AYODHYÂ.

'Íkshváku's sons from days of old
Were ever brave and mighty-souled.
The land their arms had made their own
Was bounded by the sea alone.
Their holy works have won them praise,
Through countless years, from Manu's days.
Their ancient sire was Śagar, he
Whose high command dug out the sea:[1]
With sixty thousand sons to throng
Around him as he marched along.
From them this glorious tale proceeds:
The great Rámáyan tells their deeds.
This noble song whose lines contain
Lessons of duty, love, and gain,
We two will now at length recite,
While good men listen with delight.
On Sarjú's[2] bank, of ample size,
The happy realm of Kośal lies,
With fertile length of fair champaign
And flocks and herds and wealth of grain.
There, famous in her old renown,
Ayodhyá[3] stands, the royal town,

[1] This exploit is related in Canto XL.

[2] The Sarjú or Ghaghra, anciently called Sarayu, rises in the Himalayas, and after flowing through the province of Oudh, falls into the Ganges.

[3] The ruins of the ancient capital of Ráma and the Children of the Sun may still be traced in the present Ajudhyá near Fyzabad. Ajudhyá is the Jerusalem or Mecca of the Hindus.

In bygone ages built and planned
By sainted Manu's[1] princely hand.
Imperial seat! her walls extend
Twelve measured leagues from end to end,
And three in width from side to side,
With square and palace beautified.
Her gates at even distance stand;
Her ample roads are wisely planned.
Right glorious is her royal street
Where streams allay the dust and heat.
On level ground in even row
Her houses rise in goodly show:
Terrace and palace, arch and gate
The queenly city decorate.
High are her ramparts, strong and vast,
By ways at even distance passed,
With circling moat, both deep and wide,
And store of weapons fortified.

King Daśaratha, lofty-souled,
That city guarded and controlled,
With towering Sál trees belted round,[2]
And many a grove and pleasure ground,
As royal Indra, throned on high,
Rules his fair city in the sky.[3]

---

[1] A legislator and saint, the son of Brahmá or a personification of Brahmá himself, the creator of the world, and progenitor of mankind. Derived from the root *man* to think, the word means originally *man*, the thinker, and is found in this sense in the Rig-veda.

Manu as a legislator is identified with the Cretan Minos, as progenitor of mankind with the German Mannus: 'Celebrant carminibus antiquis, quod unum apud illos memoriæ et annalium genus est, Tuisconem deum terra editum, et filium Mannum, originem gentis conditoresque.' TACITUS, *Germania*, Cap. II.

[2] The Sál (Shorea Robusta) is a valuable timber tree of considerable height.

[3] The city of Indra is called Amarávatí or Home of the Immortals.

She seems a painted city, fair
With chess-board line and even square.[1]
And cool boughs shade the lovely lake
Where weary men their thirst may slake.
There gilded chariots gleam and shine,
And stately piles the Gods enshrine.
There gay sleek people ever throng
To festival and dance and song.
A mine is she of gems and sheen,
The darling home of Fortune's Queen.
With noblest sort of drink and meat,
The fairest rice and golden wheat,
And fragrant with the chaplet's scent
With holy oil and incense blent.
With many an elephant and steed,
And wains for draught and cars for speed.
With envoys sent by distant kings,
And merchants with their precious things.
With banners o'er her roofs that play,
And weapons that a hundred slay;[2]
All warlike engines framed by man,
And every classs of artisan.
A city rich beyond compare
With bards and minstrels gathered there,
And men and damsels who entrance
The soul with play and song and dance.
In every street is heard the lute,
The drum, the tabret, and the flute,

---

[1] Schlegel thinks that this refers to the marble of different colours with which the houses were adorned. It seems more natural to understand it as implying the regularity of the streets and houses.

[2] The *Śataghnī, i. e. centicide,* or slayer of a hundred, is generally supposed to be a sort of fire-arms, or the ancient Indian rocket; but it is also described as a stone set round with iron spikes.

The Veda chanted soft and low,
The ringing of the archer's bow;
With bands of godlike heroes skilled
In every warlike weapon, filled,
And kept by warriors from the foe,
As Nágas guard their home below.[1]
There wisest Bráhmans evermore
  The flame of worship feed,
And versed in all the Vedas' lore,
  Their lives of virtue lead.
Truthful and pure, they freely give;
  They keep each sense controlled,
And in their holy fervour live
  Like the great saints of old.

---

[1] The Nágas (serpents) are demigods with a human face and serpent body. They inhabit Pátála or the regions under the earth. Bhogavatí is the name of their capital city. Serpents are still worshipped in India. See Fergusson's *Tree and Serpent Worship*.

CANTO VI.

THE KING.

There reigned a king of name revered,
To country and to town endeared,
Great Daśaratha, good and sage,
Well read in Scripture's holy page:
Upon his kingdom's weal intent,
Mighty and brave and provident;
The pride of old Ikshváku's seed
For lofty thought and righteous deed.
Peer of the saints, for virtues famed,
For foes subdued and passions tamed;
A rival in his wealth untold
Of Indra and the Lord of Gold.
Like Manu first of kings, he reigned,
And worthily his state maintained.
For firm and just and ever true
Love, duty, gain he kept in view,
And ruled his city rich and free,
Like Indra's Amarávatí.
And worthy of so fair a place
There dwelt a just and happy race
With troops of children blest.
Each man contented sought no more,
Nor longed with envy for the store
By richer friends possessed.
For poverty was there unknown,

And each man counted as his own
 Kine, steeds, and gold, and grain.
All dressed in raiment bright and clean,
And every townsman might be seen
 With earrings, wreath, or chain.
None deigned to feed on broken fare,
And none was false or stingy there.
A piece of gold, the smallest pay,
Was earned by labour for a day.
On every arm were bracelets worn,
And none was faithless or forsworn,
 A braggart or unkind.
None lived upon another's wealth,
None pined with dread or broken health,
 Or dark disease of mind.
High-souled were all. The slanderous word,
The boastful lie, were never heard.
Each man was constant to his vows,
And lived devoted to his spouse.
No other love his fancy knew,
And she was tender, kind, and true.
Her dames were fair of form and face,
With charm of wit and gentle grace,
With modest raiment simply neat,
And winning manners soft and sweet.
The twice-born sages, whose delight
Was Scripture's page and holy rite,
Their calm and settled course pursued,
Nor sought the menial multitude.
In many a Scripture each was versed,
And each the flame of worship nursed,
 And gave with lavish hand.
Each paid to Heaven the offerings due,
And none was godless or untrue

In all that holy band.
To Bráhmans, as the laws ordain,
The Warrior caste were ever fain
The reverence due to pay;
And these the Vaiśyas' peaceful crowd,
Who trade and toil for gain, were proud
To honour and obey;
And all were by the Śúdras[1] served,
Who never from their duty swerved.
Their proper worship all addressed
To Bráhman, spirits, God, and guest.
Pure and unmixt their rites remained,
Their race's honour ne'er was stained.[2]
Cheered by his grandsons, sons, and wife,
Each passed a long and happy life.
Thus was that famous city held
By one who all his race excelled,
Blest in his gentle reign,
As the whole land aforetime swayed
By Manu, prince of men, obeyed
Her king from main to main.
And heroes kept her, strong and brave,
As lions guard their mountain cave:
Fierce as devouring flame they burned,
And fought till death, but never turned.
Horses had she of noblest breed,
Like Indra's for their form and speed,
From Váhlí's[3] hills and Sindhu's[4] sand,

---

[1] The fourth and lowest pure caste, whose duty was to serve the three first classes.

[2] By forbidden marriages between persons of different castes.

[3] Váhlí or Váhlíka is Bactriana; its name is preserved in the modern Balkh.

[4] The Sanskrit word Sindhu is in the singular the name of the river

Vanáyu[1] and Kámboja's land.[2]
Her noble elephants had strayed
Through Vindhyan and Himálayan shade,
Gigantic in their bulk and height,
Yet gentle in their matchless might.
They rivalled well the world-spread fame
Of the great stock from which they came,
Of Váman, vast of size,
Of Mahápadma's glorious line,
Thine, Anjan, and, Airávat, thine,[3]
Upholders of the skies.
With those, enrolled in fourfold class,
Who all their mighty kin surpass,
Whom men Matangas name,
And Mrigas spotted black and white,
And Bhadras of unwearied might,
And Mandras hard to tame.[4]

Indus, in the plural of the people and territories on its banks. The name appears as *Hidhu* in the cuneiform inscription of Darius son of Hystaspes, in which the nations tributary to that king are enumerated. The Hebrew form is *Hoddu* (Esther, I. 1.). In Zend it appears as *Hendu* in a somewhat wider sense. With the Persians later the signification of *Hind* seems to have co-extended with their increasing acquaintance with the country. The weak Ionic dialect omitted the Persian *h*, and we find in Hecatæus and Herodotus Ἴνδος and ἡ Ἰνδική. In this form the Romans received the names and transmitted them to us. The Arabian geographers in their ignorance that Hind and Sind are two forms of the same word have made of them two brothers and traced their descent from Noah. See Lassen's Indische Alterthumskunde, Vol. I. pp. 2, 3.

[1] The situation of Vanáyu is not exactly determined; it seems to have lain to the north-west of India.

[2] Kámboja was probably still further to the north-west. Lassen thinks that the name is etymologically connected with *Cambyses* which in the cuneiform inscription of Behistun is written Ka(m)bujia.

[3] The elephants of Indra and other deities who preside over the four points of the compass.

[4] 'There are four kinds of elephants. 1 *Bhaddar*. It is well propor-

Thus, worthy of the name she bore,[1]
Ayodhyá for a league or more
Cast a bright glory round,
Where Daśaratha wise and great
Governed his fair ancestral state,
With every virtue crowned.
Like Indra in the skies he reigned
In that good town whose wall contained
High domes and turrets proud,
With gates and arcs of triumph decked,
And sturdy barriers to protect
Her gay and countless crowd.

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tioned, has an erect head, a broad chest, large ears, a long tail, and is bold and can bear fatigue. 2. *Mand.* It is black, has yellow eyes, a uniformly sized body, and is wild and ungovernable. 3 *Mirg.* It has a whitish skin, with black spots. 4 *Mir.* It has a small head, and obeys readily. It gets frightened when it thunders.' *Ain-i-Akbari.* Translated by H. Blochmann, Aín 41. *The Imperial Elephant Stables.*

[1] Ayodhyá means *not to be fought against.*

CANTO VII.

THE MINISTERS.

Two sages, holy saints, had he,
His ministers and priests to be:
Vaśishṭha, faithful to advise,
And Vámadeva, Scripture-wise.
Eight other lords around him stood,
All skilled to counsel, wise and good:
Jayanta, Vijay, Dhrishṭi bold
In fight, affairs of war controlled:
Siddhárth and Arthasádhak true
Watched o'er expense and revenue,
And Dharmapál and wise Aśok
Of right and law and justice spoke.
With these the sage Sumantra, skilled
To urge the car, high station filled.
All these in knowledge duly trained
Each passion and each sense restrained:
With modest manners, nobly bred,
Each plan and nod and look they read,
Upon their neighbours' good intent,
Most active and benevolent:
As sit the Vasus[1] round their king,
They sate around him counselling.
They ne'er in virtue's loftier pride
Another's lowly gifts decried.
In fair and seemly garb arrayed,
No weak uncertain plans they made.

---

[1] Attendants of Indra, eight Gods whose names signify fire, light and its phenomena.

Well skilled in business, fair and just,
They gained the people's love and trust,
And thus without oppression stored
The swelling treasury of their lord.
Bound in sweet friendship each to each,
They spoke kind thoughts in gentle speech.
They looked alike with equal eye
On every caste, on low and high.
Devoted to their king, they sought,
Ere his tongue spoke, to learn his thought,
And knew, as each occasion rose,
To hide their counsel or disclose.
In foreign lands or in their own
Whatever passed, to them was known.
By secret spies they timely knew
What men were doing or would do.
Skilled in the grounds of war and peace
They saw the monarch's state increase,
Watching his weal with conquering eye
That never let occasion by,
While nature lent her aid to bless
Their labours with unbought success.
Never for anger, lust, or gain,
Would they their lips with falsehood stain.
Inclined to mercy they could scan
The weakness and the strength of man.
They fairly judged both high and low,
And ne'er would wrong a guiltless foe ;
Yet if a fault were proved, each one
Would punish e'en his own dear son.
But there and in the kingdom's bound
No thief or man impure was found :
None of loose life or evil fame,
No tempter of another's dame.

Contented with their lot each caste
Calm days in blissful quiet passed;
And, all in fitting tasks employed,
Country and town deep rest enjoyed.
With these wise lords around his throne
  The monarch justly reigned,
And making every heart his own
  The love of all men gained.
With trusty agents, as beseems,
  Each distant realm he scanned,
As the sun visits with his beams
  Each corner of the land.
Ne'er would he on a mightier foe
  With hostile troops advance,
Nor at an equal strike a blow
  In war's delusive chance.
These lords in council bore their part
With ready brain and faithful heart,
With skill and knowledge, sense and tact,
Good to advise and bold to act.
And high and endless fame he won
  With these to guide his schemes,
As, risen in his might, the sun
  Wins glory with his beams.

CANTO VIII.

SUMANTRA'S SPEECH.

But splendid, just, and great of mind,
The childless king for offspring pined.
No son had he his name to grace,
Transmitter of his royal race.
Long had his anxious bosom wrought,
And as he pondered rose the thought:
'A votive steed 'twere good to slay,
So might a son the gift repay.'
Before his lords his plan he laid,
And bade them with their wisdom aid:
Then with these words Sumantra, best
Of royal counsellors, addressed:
'Hither, Vaśishṭha at their head,
Let all my priestly guides be led.'

To him Sumantra made reply:
'Hear, Sire, a tale of days gone by.
To many a sage in time of old,
Sanatkumár, the saint, foretold
How from thine ancient line, O King,
A son, when years came round, should spring.
'Here dwells,' 'twas thus the seer began,
'Of Kaśyap's[1] race, a holy man,
Vibháṇḍak named: to him shall spring
A son, the famous Rishyaśring.
Bred with the deer that round him roam,

[1] Kaśyap was a grandson of the God Brahmá. He is supposed to have given his name to Kashmír = Kaśyapa-mira, Kaśyap's Lake.

The wood shall be that hermit's home.
To him no mortal shall be known
Except his holy sire alone.
Still by those laws shall he abide
Which lives of youthful Bráhmans guide,
Obedient to the strictest rule
That forms the young ascetic's school:
And all the wondering world shall hear
Of his stern life and penance drear;
His care to nurse the holy fire
And do the bidding of his sire.
Then, seated on the Angas'[1] throne,
Shall Lomapád to fame be known.
But folly wrought by that great king
A plague upon the land shall bring;
No rain for many a year shall fall
And grievous drought shall ruin all.
The troubled king with many a prayer
Shall bid the priests some cure declare:
'The lore of Heaven 'tis yours to know,
Nor are ye blind to things below:
Declare, O holy men, the way
This plague to expiate and stay.'
Those best of Bráhmans shall reply:
'By every art, O Monarch, try
Hither to bring Vibháṇḍak's child,
Persuaded, captured, or beguiled.
And when the boy is hither led
To him thy daughter duly wed.'

But how to bring that wondrous boy

---

[1] The people of Anga. 'Anga is said in the lexicons to be Bengal; but here certainly another region is intended situated at the confluence of the Sarjú with the Ganges, and not far distant from Daśaratha's dominions.' GORRESIO. It comprised part of Behar and Bhagulpore.

His troubled thoughts will long employ,
And hopeless to achieve the task
He counsel of his lords will ask,
And bid his priests and servants bring
With honour saintly Rishyaśring.
But when they hear the monarch's speech,
All these their master will beseech,
With trembling hearts and looks of woe,
To spare them, for they fear to go.
And many a plan will they declare
  And crafty plots will frame,
And promise fair to show him there,
  Unforced, with none to blame.
On every word his lords shall say,
  The king will meditate,
And on the third returning day
  Recall them to debate.
Then this shall be the plan agreed,
  That damsels shall be sent
Attired in holy hermits' weed,
  And skilled in blandishment,
That they the hermit may beguile
With every art and amorous wile
  Whose use they know so well,
And by their witcheries seduce
The unsuspecting young recluse
  To leave his father's cell.
Then when the boy with willing feet
Shall wander from his calm retreat
  And in that city stand,
The troubles of the king shall end,
And streams of blessed rain descend
  Upon the thirsty land.
Thus shall the holy Rishyaśring

To Lomapád, the mighty king,
By wedlock be allied;
For Śántá, fairest of the fair,
In mind and grace beyond compare,
Shall be his royal bride.
He, at the Offering of the Steed,
The flames with holy oil shall feed,
And for King Daśaratha gain
Sons whom his prayers have begged in vain.'
'I have repeated, Sire, thus far,
The words of old Sanatkumár,
In order as he spoke them then
Amid the crowd of holy men.'
Then Daśaratha cried with joy,
'Say how they brought the hermit boy.'

CANTO IX.

RISHYAŚRING.

The wise Sumantra, thus addressed,
Unfolded at the king's behest
The plan the lords in council laid
To draw the hermit from the shade:
'The priest, amid the lordly crowd,
To Lomapád thus spoke aloud:
'Hear, King, the plot our thoughts have framed,
A harmless trick by all unblamed.
Far from the world that hermit's child
Lives lonely in the distant wild:
A stranger to the joys of sense,
His bliss is pain and abstinence;
And all unknown are women yet
To him, a holy anchoret.
The gentle passions we will wake
That with resistless influence shake
The hearts of men; and he
Drawn by enchantment strong and sweet
Shall follow from his lone retreat,
And come and visit thee.
Let ships be formed with utmost care
That artificial trees may bear,
And sweet fruit deftly made;
Let goodly raiment, rich and rare,
And flowers, and many a bird be there
Beneath the leafy shade.
Upon the ships thus decked a band
Of young and lovely girls shall stand,

Rich in each charm that wakes desire,
And eyes that burn with amorous fire;
Well skilled to sing, and play, and dance,
And ply their trade with smile and glance.
Let these, attired in hermits' dress,
Betake them to the wilderness,
And bring the boy of life austere
  A voluntary captive here.'

  He ended; and the king agreed,
  By the priest's counsel won,
And all the ministers took heed
  To see his bidding done.
In ships with wondrous art prepared
Away the lovely women fared,
And soon beneath the shade they stood
Of the wild, lonely, dreary wood.
And there the leafy cot they found
  Where dwelt the devotee,
And looked with eager eyes around
  The hermit's son to see.
Still, of Vibháṇḍak sore afraid,
They hid behind the creepers' shade.
But when by careful watch they knew
The elder saint was far from view,
With bolder steps they ventured nigh
To catch the youthful hermit's eye.
Then all the damsels, blithe and gay,
At various games began to play.
They tossed the flying ball about
With dance and song and merry shout,
And moved, their scented tresses bound
With wreaths, in mazy motion round.
Some girls as if by love possessed,
Sank to the earth in feigned unrest,

Up starting quickly to pursue
Their intermitted game anew.
It was a lovely sight to see
Those fair ones, as they played,
While fragrant robes were floating free,
And bracelets clashing in their glee
A pleasant tinkling made.
The anklet's chime, the Koïl's[1] cry
With music filled the place
As 'twere some city in the sky
Which heavenly minstrels grace.
With each voluptuous art they strove
To win the tenant of the grove,
And with their graceful forms inspire
His modest soul with soft desire.
With arch of brow, with beck and smile,
With every passion-waking wile
Of glance and lotus hand,
With all enticements that excite
The longing for unknown delight
Which boys in vain withstand.
Forth came the hermit's son to view
The wondrous sight to him so new,
And gazed in rapt surprise,
For from his natal hour till then
On woman or the sons of men
He ne'er had cast his eyes.
He saw them with their waists so slim,
With fairest shape and faultless limb,
In variegated robes arrayed,
And sweetly singing as they played.

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[1] The Koïl or *kokila* (Cuculus Indicus) as the harbinger of spring and love is a universal favourite with Indian poets. His voice when first heard in a glorious spring morning is not unpleasant, but becomes in the hot season intolerably wearisome to European ears.

Near and more near the hermit drew,
And watched them at their game,
And stronger still the impulse grew
To question whence they came.
They marked the young ascetic gaze
With curious eye and wild amaze,
And sweet the long-eyed damsels sang,
And shrill their merry laughter rang.
Then came they nearer to his side,
And languishing with passion cried:
'Whose son, O youth, and who art thou,
Come suddenly to join us now?
And why dost thou all lonely dwell
In the wild wood? We pray thee, tell.
We wish to know thee, gentle youth;
Come, tell us, if thou wilt, the truth.'

He gazed upon that sight he ne'er
Had seen before, of girls so fair,
And out of love a longing rose
His sire and lineage to disclose:
'My father,' thus he made reply,
'Is Kaśyap's son, a saint most high,
Vibháṇḍak styled; from him I came,
And Rishyaśring he calls my name.
Our hermit cot is near this place:
Come thither, O ye fair of face;
There be it mine, with honour due,
Ye gentle youths, to welcome you.'

They heard his speech, and gave consent,
And gladly to his cottage went.
Vibháṇḍak's son received them well
Beneath the shelter of his cell
With guest-gift, water for their feet,
And woodland fruit and roots to eat.

They smiled, and spoke sweet words like these,
Delighted with his courtesies:
'We too have goodly fruit in store,
Grown on the trees that shade our door;
Come, if thou wilt, kind Hermit, haste
The produce of our grove to taste;
And let, O good Ascetic, first
This holy water quench thy thirst.'
They spoke, and gave him comfits sweet
Prepared ripe fruits to counterfeit;
And many a dainty cate beside
And luscious mead their stores supplied.
The seeming fruits, in taste and look,
The unsuspecting hermit took,
For, strange to him, their form beguiled
The dweller in the lonely wild.
Then round his neck fair arms were flung,
And there the laughing damsels clung,
And pressing nearer and more near
With sweet lips whispered at his ear;
While rounded limb and swelling breast
The youthful hermit softly pressed.
The pleasing charm of that strange bowl,
 The touch of a tender limb,
Over his yielding spirit stole
 And sweetly vanquished him,
But vows, they said, must now be paid;
 They bade the boy farewell,
And, of the aged saint afraid,
 Prepared to leave the dell.
With ready guile they told him where
 Their hermit dwelling lay;
Then, lest the sire should find them there,
 Sped by wild paths away.

They fled and left him there alone
By longing love possessed;
And with a heart no more his own
He roamed about distressed.
The aged saint came home, to find
The hermit boy distraught,
Revolving in his troubled mind
One solitary thought.
'Why dost thou not, my son,' he cried,
'Thy due obeisance pay?
Why do I see thee in the tide
Of whelming thought to-day?
A devotee should never wear
A mien so sad and strange.
Come, quickly, dearest child, declare
The reason of the change.'
And Rishyaśring, when questioned thus,
Made answer in this wise:
'O sire, there came to visit us
Some men with lovely eyes.
About my neck soft arms they wound
And kept me tightly held
To tender breasts so soft and round,
That strangely heaved and swelled.
They sing more sweetly as they dance
Than e'er I heard till now,
And play with many a sidelong glance
And arching of the brow.'
'My son,' said he,' thus giants roam
Where holy hermits are,
And wander round their peaceful home
Their rites austere to mar.
I charge thee, thou must never lay
Thy trust in them, dear boy:

They seek thee only to betray,
And woo but to destroy.'
Thus having warned him of his foes
That night at home he spent,
And when the morrow's sun arose
Forth to the forest went.

But Rishyaśring with eager pace
Sped forth and hurried to the place
Where he those visitants had seen
Of daintly waist and charming mien.
When from afar they saw the son
Of Saint Vibháṇḍak toward them run,
To meet the hermit boy they hied,
And hailed him with a smile, and cried:
'O come, we pray, dear lord, behold
Our lovely home of which we told:
Due honour there to thee we'll pay,
And speed thee on thy homeward way.'
Pleased with the gracious words they said
He followed where the damsels led.
As with his guides his steps he bent,
That Bráhman high of worth,
A flood of rain from heaven was sent
That gladdened all the earth.

Vibháṇḍak took his homeward road,
And wearied by the heavy load
Of roots and woodland fruit he bore
Entered at last his cottage door.
Fain for his son he looked around,
But desolate the cell he found.
He stayed not then to bathe his feet,
Though fainting with the toil and heat,
But hurried forth and roamed about
Calling the boy with cry and shout.

He searched the wood, but all in vain;
Nor tidings of his son could gain.

One day beyond the forest's bound
The wandering saint a village found,
And asked the swains and neatherds there
Who owned the land so rich and fair,
With all the hamlets of the plain,
And herds of kine and fields of grain.
They listened to the hermit's words,
And all the guardians of the herds,
With suppliant hands together pressed,
This answer to the saint addressed:
'The Angas' lord who bears the name
Of Lomapád, renowned by fame,
Bestowed these hamlets with their kine
And all their riches, as a sign
Of grace, on Ṙishyaśring; and he
Vibháṇḍak's son is said to be.'
The hermit with exulting breast
The mighty will of fate confessed,
By meditation's eye discerned;
And cheerful to his home returned.

A stately ship, at early morn,
The hermit's son away had borne.
Loud roared the clouds, as on he sped,
The sky grew blacker overhead;
Till, as he reached the royal town,
A mighty flood of rain came down.
By the great rain the monarch's mind
The coming of his guest divined.
To meet the honoured youth he went,
And low to earth his head he bent.
With his own priest to lead the train,
He gave the gift high guests obtain,

And sought, with all who dwelt within
The city walls, his grace to win.
He fed him with the daintiest fare,
He served him with unceasing care,
And ministered with anxious eyes
Lest anger in his breast should rise;
And gave to be the Bráhman's bride
His own fair daughter, lotus-eyed.

Thus loved and honoured by the king,
The glorious Bráhman Rishyaśring
Passed in that royal town his life
With Śántá his beloved wife.'

CANTO X.

RISHYAŚRING INVITED.

'Again, O best of kings, give ear:
My saving words attentive hear,
And listen to the tale of old
By that illustrious Bráhman told.
'Of famed Ikshváku's line shall spring
('Twas thus he spoke) a pious king,
Named Daśaratha, good and great,
True to his word and fortunate.
He with the Angas' mighty lord
Shall ever live in sweet accord,
And his a daughter fair shall be,
Śántá of happy destiny.
But Lomapád, the Angas' chief,
Still pining in his childless grief,
To Daśaratha thus shall say:
'Give me thy daughter, friend, I pray,
Thy Śántá of the tranquil mind,
The noblest one of womankind.'

The father, swift to feel for woe,
Shall on his friend his child bestow;
And he shall take her and depart
To his own town with joyous heart.
The maiden home in triumph led,
To Rishyaśring the king shall wed.
And he with loving joy and pride
Shall take her for his honoured bride.
And Daśaratha to a rite
That best of Bráhmans shall invite

With supplicating prayer,
To celebrate the sacrifice
To win him sons and Paradise,[1]
That he will fain prepare.
From him the lord of men at length
The boon he seeks shall gain,
And see four sons of boundless strength
His royal line maintain.'
'Thus did the godlike saint of old
The will of fate declare,
And all that should befall unfold
Amid the sages there.
O Prince supreme of men, go thou,
Consult thy holy guide,
And win, to aid thee in thy vow,
This Bráhman to thy side.'

Sumantra's counsel, wise and good,
King Daśaratha heard,
Then by Vaśishṭha's side he stood
And thus with him conferred:
'Sumantra counsels thus: do thou
My priestly guide, the plan allow.'
Vaśishṭha gave his glad consent,
And forth the happy monarch went
With lords and servants on the road
That led to Rishyaśring's abode.
Forests and rivers duly past,
He reached the distant town at last
Of Lomapád the Angas' king,
And entered it with welcoming.

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[1] 'Sons and Paradise are intimately connected in Indian belief. A man desires above every thing to have a son to perpetuate his race, and to assist with sacrifices and funeral rites to make him worthy to obtain a lofty seat in heaven or to preserve that which he has already obtained.' GORRESIO.

On through the crowded streets he came,
And, radiant as the kindled flame,
He saw within the monarch's house
The hermit's son most glorious.
There Lomapád, with joyful breast,
  To him all honour paid,
For friendship for his royal guest
  His faithful bosom swayed.
Thus entertained with utmost care
Seven days, or eight, he tarried there,
And then that best of men thus broke
His purpose to the king, and spoke:
'O King of men, mine ancient friend,'
  (Thus Daśaratha prayed)
Thy Śántá with her husband send
  My sacrifice to aid.'
Said he who ruled the Angas, Yea,
  And his consent was won:
And then at once he turned away
  To warn the hermit's son.
He told him of their ties beyond
Their old affection's faithful bond:
'This king,' he said, 'from days of old
A well beloved friend I hold.
To me this pearl of dames he gave
From childless woe mine age to save,
The daughter whom he loved so much,
Moved by compassion's gentle touch.
In him thy Śántá's father see:
As I am even so is he.
For sons the childless monarch yearns:
To thee alone for help he turns.
Go thou, the sacred rite ordain
To win the sons he prays to gain:

Go, with thy wife thy succour lend,
And give his vows a blissful end.'

The hermit's son with quick accord
Obeyed the Angas' mighty lord,
And with fair Śántá at his side
To Daśaratha's city hied.
Each king, with suppliant hands upheld,
Gazed on the other's face:
And then by mutual love impelled
Met in a close embrace.
Then Daśaratha's thoughtful care,
Before he parted thence,
Bade trusty servants homeward bear
The glad intelligence:
'Let all the town be bright and gay,
With burning incense sweet;
Let banners wave, and water lay
The dust in every street.'

Glad were the citizens to learn
The tidings of their lord's return,
And through the city every man
Obediently his task began.
And fair and bright Ayodhyá showed,
As following his guest he rode
Through the full streets where shell and drum
Proclaimed aloud the king was come.
And all the people with delight
Kept gazing on their king,
Attended by that youth so bright,
The glorious Rishyaśring.
When to his home the king had brought
The hermit's saintly son,
He deemed that all his task was wrought,

And all he prayed for won.
And lords who saw that stranger dame
So beautiful to view,
Rejoiced within their hearts, and came
And paid her honour too.
There Rishyaśring passed blissful days,
Graced like the king with love and praise,
And shone in glorious light with her,
Sweet Śántá, for his minister,
As Brahmá's son Vaśishṭha, he
Who wedded Saint Arundhatí.[1]

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[1] One of the Pleiades and generally regarded as the model of wifely excellence.

CANTO XI.

THE SACRIFICE DECREED.

The Dewy Season[1] came and went;
  The spring returned again:
Then would the king, with mind intent,
  His sacrifice ordain.
He came to Rishyaśring, and bowed
  To him of look divine,
And bade him aid his offering vowed
  For heirs, to save his line.
Nor would the youth his aid deny:
  He spake the monarch fair,
And prayed him for that rite so high
  All requisites prepare.
The king to wise Sumantra cried
  Who stood aye ready near;
'Go summon quick each holy guide,
  To counsel and to hear.'
Obedient to his lord's behest
  Away Sumantra sped,
And brought Vaśishṭha and the rest,
  In Scripture deeply read.
Suyajña, Vámadeva came,
  Jáváli, Kaśyap's son,
And old Vaśishṭha, dear to fame,
  Obedient every one.
King Daśaratha met them there
  And duly honoured each,

[1] The Hindu year is divided into six seasons of two months each, spring, summer, rains, autumn, winter, and dews.

And spoke in pleasant words his fair
And salutary speech :
'In childless longing doomed to pine,
No happiness, O lords, is mine.
So have I for this cause decreed
To slay the sacrificial steed.
Fain would I pay that offering high
Wherein the horse is doomed to die,
With Rishyaśring his aid to lend,
And with your glory to befriend.'

With loud applause each holy man
Received his speech, approved the plan,
And, by the wise Vaśishṭha led,
Gave praises to the king, and said :
'The sons thou cravest shalt thou see,
Of fairest glory, born to thee,
Whose holy feelings bid thee take
This righteous course for offspring's sake.'
Cheered by the ready praise of those
Whose aid he sought, his spirits rose,
And thus the king his speech renewed
With looks of joy and gratitude :
'Let what the coming rites require
Be ready as the priests desire,
And let the horse, ordained to bleed,
With fitting guard and priest, be freed.[1]
Yonder on Sarjú's northern side
The sacrificial ground provide ;
And let the saving rites, that naught
Ill-omened may occur, be wrought.
The offering I announce to-day

[1] It was essential that the horse should wander free for a year before immolation, as a sign that his master's paramount sovereignty was acknowledged by all neighbouring princes.

Each lord of earth may claim to pay,
Provided that his care can guard
The holy rite by flaws unmarred.
For wandering fiends, whose watchful spite
Waits eagerly to spoil each rite,
Hunting with keenest eye detect
The slightest slip, the least neglect;
And when the sacred work is crossed
The workman is that moment lost.
Let preparation due be made:
  Your powers the charge can meet:
That so the noble rite be paid
  In every point complete.'
And all the Bráhmans answered, Yea,
  His mandate honouring,
And gladly promised to obey
  The order of the king.
They cried with voices raised aloud:
  'Success attend thine aim!'
Then bade farewell, and lowly bowed,
  And hastened whence they came.
King Daśaratha went within,
  His well loved wives to see:
And said: 'Your lustral rites begin,
  For these shall prosper me.
A glorious offering I prepare
That precious fruit of sons may bear.'
Their lily faces brightened fast
  Those pleasant words to hear,
As lilies, when the winter's past,
  In lovelier hues appear.

CANTO XII.

THE SACRIFICE BEGUN.

Again the spring with genial heat
Returning made the year complete.
To win him sons, without delay
His vow the king resolved to pay:
And to Vaśishṭha, saintly man,
In modest words this speech began:
'Prepare the rite with all things fit
As is ordained in Holy Writ,
And keep with utmost care afar
Whate'er its sacred forms might mar.
Thou art, my lord, my trustiest guide,
Kind-hearted, and my friend beside;
So is it meet thou undertake
This heavy task for duty's sake.'

Then he, of twice-born men the best,
His glad assent at once expressed:
'Fain will I do whate'er may be
Desired, O honoured King, by thee.'
To ancient priests he spoke, who, trained
In holy rites, deep skill had gained:
'Here guards be stationed, good and sage,
Religious men of trusted age.
And various workmen send and call,
Who frame the door and build the wall:
With men of every art and trade,
Who read the stars and ply the spade,
And mimes and minstrels hither bring,
And damsels trained to dance and sing.'

Then to the learned men he said,
In many a page of Scripture read:
'Be yours each rite performed to see
According to the king's decree.
And stranger Bráhmans quickly call
To this great rite that welcomes all.
Pavilions for the princes, decked
With art and ornament, erect,
And handsome booths by thousands made
The Bráhman visitors to shade,
Arranged in order side by side,
With meat and drink and all supplied.
And ample stables we shall need
For many an elephant and steed:
And chambers where the men may lie,
And vast apartments, broad and high,
Fit to receive the countless bands
Of warriors come from distant lands.
For our own people too provide
Sufficient tents, extended wide,
And stores of meat and drink prepare,
And all that can be needed there.
And food in plenty must be found
For guests from all the country round.
Of various viands presents make,
For honour, not for pity's sake,
That fit regard and worship be
Paid to each caste in due degree.
And let not wish or wrath excite
Your hearts the meanest guest to slight;
But still observe with special grace
Those who obtain the foremost place,
Whether for happier skill in art
Or bearing in the rite their part.

Do you, I pray, with friendly mind
Perform the task to you assigned,
And work the rite, as bids the law,
Without omission, slip, or flaw.'

They answered: 'As thou seest fit
So will we do and naught omit.'
The sage Vaśishṭha then addressed
Sumantra called at his behest:
'The princes of the earth invite,
And famous lords who guard the rite,
Priest, Warrior, Merchant, lowly thrall,
In countless thousands summon all.
Where'er their home be, far or near,
Gather the good with honour here.
And Janak, whose imperial sway
The men of Mithilá[1] obey,
The firm of vow, the dread of foes,
Who all the lore of Scripture knows,
Invite him here with honour high,
King Daśaratha's old ally.
And Káśí's[2] lord of gentle speech,
Who finds a pleasant word for each,
In length of days our monarch's peer,
Illustrious king, invite him here.
The father of our ruler's bride,
Known for his virtues far and wide,
The king whom Kekaya's[3] realms obey,

---

[1] Called also Videha, later Tírabhukti, corrupted into the modern Tirhut, a province bounded on the west and east by the Gandakí and Kauśikí rivers, on the south by the Ganges, and on the north by the skirts of the Himálayas.

[2] The celebrated city of Benares. See Dr. Hall's learned and exhaustive Monograph in *the Sacred City of the Hindus*, by the Rev. M. A. Sherring.

[3] Kekaya is supposed to have been in the Panjáb. The name of

Him with his son invite, I pray.
And Lomapád, the Angas' king,
True to his vows and godlike, bring.
Far be thine invitations sent
To west and south and orient.
Call those who rule Suráshṭra's[1] land,
Suvíra's[2] realm and Sindhu's strand,
And all the kings of earth beside
In friendship's bonds with us allied:
Invite them all to hasten in
With retinue and kith and kin.'

Vaśishṭha's speech without delay
Sumantra bent him to obey,
And sent his trusty envoys forth
Eastward and westward, south and north.
Obedient to the saint's request
Himself he hurried forth, and pressed
Each nobler chief and lord and king
To hasten to the gathering.
Before the saint Vaśishṭha stood
All those who wrought with stone and wood,
And showed the work which every one
In furtherance of the rite had done.
Rejoiced their ready zeal to see,
Thus to the craftsmen all said he:
'I charge ye, masters, see to this,
That there be nothing done amiss.
And this, I pray, in mind be borne,
That not one gift ye give in scorn:
Whenever scorn a gift attends

the king was Aśvapati (Lord of Horses), father of Daśaratha's Kaikeyí.

[1] Surat.

[2] Apparently in the west of India not far from the Indus.

Great sin is his who thus offends.'

And now some days and nights had past,
And kings began to gather fast,
And precious gems in liberal store
As gifts to Dásaratha bore.
Then joy thrilled through Vaśishṭha's breast
As thus the monarch he addressed:
'Obedient to thy high decree
The kings, my lord, are come to thee.
And it has been my care to greet
And honour all with reverence meet.
Thy servants' task is ended quite,
And all is ready for the rite.
Come forth then to the sacred ground
Where all in order will be found.'
Then Rishyaśring confirmed the tale:
Nor did their words to move him fail.
The stars propitious influence lent
When forth the world's great ruler went.

Then by the sage Vaśishṭha led
The priest began to speed
Those glorious rites wherein is shed
The lifeblood of the steed.

CANTO XIII.

THE SACRIFICE FINISHED.

The circling year had filled its course,
And back was brought the wandering horse:
Then upon Sarjú's northern strand
Began the rite the king had planned.
With Rishyaśring the forms to guide,
The Bráhmans to their task applied,
At that great offering of the steed
Their lofty-minded king decreed.
The priests, who all the Scripture knew,
Performed their part in order due,
And circled round in solemn train
As precepts of the law ordain.
Pravargya rites[1] were duly sped:
For Upasads[2] the flames were fed.
Then from the plant[3] the juice was squeezed,
And those high-saints with minds well pleased
Performed the mystic rites begun
With bathing ere the rise of sun.

---

[1] 'The Pravargya ceremony lasts for three days, and is always performed twice a day, in the forenoon and afternoon. It precedes the animal and Soma sacrifices. For without having undergone it, no one is allowed to take part in the solemn Sóma feast prepared for the gods.' HAUG'S *Aitareya Brahmaṇam.* Vol. II. p. 41. note. *q. v.*

[2] *Upasads.* 'The Gods said, Let us perform the burnt-offerings called Upasads (*i. e.* besieging). For by means of an *Upasad, i. e.* besieging, they conquer a large (fortified) town.'—*Ibid.* p. 52.

[3] The Soma plant, or Asclepias Acida. Its fermented juice was drunk in sacrifice by the priests and offered to the Gods who enjoyed the intoxicating draught.

They gave the portion, Indra's claim,
And hymned the King whom none can blame.
The mid-day bathing followed next,
Observed as bids the holy text.
Then the good priests with utmost care,
In form that Scripture's rules declare,
For the third time pure water shed
On high-souled Daśaratha's head.
Then Rishyaśring and all the rest
To Indra and the Gods addressed
Their sweet-toned hymn of praise and prayer,
And called them in the rite to share.
With sweetest song and hymn entoned
They gave the Gods in heaven enthroned,
As duty bids, the gifts they claim,
The holy oil that feeds the flame.
And many an offering there was paid,
And not one slip in all was made.
For with most careful heed they saw
That all was done by Veda law.
None, all those days, was seen oppressed
By hunger or by toil distressed.
Why speak of human kind? No beast
Was there that lacked an ample feast.
For there was store for all who came,
For orphan child and lonely dame;
The old and young were well supplied,
The poor and hungry satisfied.
Throughout the day ascetics fed,
And those who roam to beg their bread:
While all around the cry was still,
'Give forth, give forth,' and 'Eat your fill.'
'Give forth with liberal hand the meal,
And various robes in largess deal.'

Urged by these cries on every side
Unweariedly their task they plied:
And heaps of food like hills in size
In boundless plenty met the eyes:
And lakes of sauce, each day renewed,
Refreshed the weary multitude.
And strangers there from distant lands,
And women folk in crowded bands
The best of food and drink obtained
At the great rite the king ordained.
Apart from all, the Bráhmans there,
Thousands on thousands, took their share
Of various dainties sweet to taste,
On plates of gold and silver placed,
All ready set, as, when they willed,
The twice-born men their places filled.
And servants in fair garments dressed
Waited upon each Bráhman guest.
Of cheerful mind and mien were they,
With gold and jewelled earrings gay.
The best of Bráhmans praised the fare
Of countless sorts, of flavour rare:
And thus to Raghu's son they cried:
'We bless thee, and are satisfied.'
Between the rites some Bráhmans spent
The time in learned argument,
With ready flow of speech, sedate,
And keen to vanquish in debate.[1]

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[1] 'Tum in cærimoniarum intervallis Brachmanæ facundi, sollertes, crebros sermones de rerum causis instituebant, alter alterum vincendi cupidi. This public disputation in the assembly of Bráhmans on the nature of things, and the almost fraternal connexion between theology and philosophy deserves some notice; whereas the priests of some religions are generally but little inclined to show favour to philosophers, nay, sometimes persecute them with the most rancorous hatred, as we are taught both by history and experience....This *śloka* is found in the

There day by day the holy train
Performed all rites as rules ordain.
No priest in all that host was found
But kept the vows that held him bound:
None, but the holy Vedas knew,
And all their six-fold science[1] too.
No Bráhman there was found unfit
To speak with eloquence and wit.

And now the appointed time came near
The sacrificial posts to rear.
They brought them, and prepared to fix
Of Bel[2] and Khádir[3] six and six;
Six, made of the Paláśa[4] tree,
Of Fig-wood one, apart to be:
Of Sleshmát[5] and of Devadár[6]
One column each, the mightiest far:
So thick the two, the arms of man
Their ample girth would fail to span.
All these with utmost care were wrought

MSS. of different recensions of the Rámáyan, and we have, therefore, the most trustworthy testimony to the antiquity of philosophy among the Indians.' SCHLEGEL.

[1] The *Angas* or appendices of the Vedas, pronunciation, prosody, grammar, ritual, astronomy, and explanation of obscurities.

[2] In Sanskrit *vilva*, the *Ægle Marmelos*. 'He who desires food and wishes to grow fat, ought to make his Yúpa (sacrificial post) of Bilva wood.' HAUG's *Aitareya Bráhmaṇam. Vol* II. p. 73.

[3] The *Mimosa Catechu*. 'He who desires heaven ought to make his Yúpa of Khádira wood.'—*Ibid.*

[4] The *Butea Frondosa*. 'He who desires beauty and sacred knowledge ought to make his Yúpa of Paláśa wood.'—*Ibid.*

[5] The *Cardia Latifolia*.

[6] A kind of pine. The word means literally the tree of the Gods: Compare the Hebrew עצי יהוה 'trees of the Lord.'

By band of priests in Scripture taught,
And all with gold were gilded bright
To add new splendour to the rite:
Twenty-and-one those stakes in all,
Each one-and-twenty cubits tall:
And one-and-twenty ribbons there
Hung on the pillars, bright and fair.
Firm in the earth they stood at last,
Where cunning craftsmen fixed them fast;
And there unshaken each remained,
Octagonal and smoothly planed.
Then ribbons over all were hung,
And flowers and scent around them flung.
Thus decked they cast a glory forth
Like the great saints who star the north.[1]
The sacrificial altar then
Was raised by skilful twice-born men,
In shape and figure to behold
An eagle with his wings of gold,
With twice nine pits and formed three-fold.
Each for some special God, beside
The pillars were the victims tied;
The birds that roam the wood, the air,
The water, and the land were there,
And snakes and things of reptile birth,
And healing herbs that spring from earth:
As texts prescribe, in Scripture found,
Three hundred victims there were bound.
The steed devoted to the host
Of Gods, the gem they honour most,
Was duly sprinkled. Then the Queen
Kauśalyá, with delighted mien,

[1] The Hindus call the constellation of Ursa Major the Seven Rishis or Saints.

With reverent steps around him paced,
And with sweet wreaths the victim graced;
Then with three swords in order due
She smote the steed with joy, and slew.
That night the queen, a son to gain,
With calm and steady heart was fain
By the dead charger's side to stay
From evening till the break of day.
Then came three priests, their care to lead
The other queens to touch the steed,
Upon Kauśalyá to attend,
Their company and aid to lend.
As by the horse she still reclined,
With happy mien and cheerful mind,
With Rishyaśring the twice-born came
And praised and blessed the royal dame.
The priest who well his duty knew,
And every sense could well subdue,
From out the bony chambers freed
And boiled the marrow of the steed.
Above the steam the monarch bent,
And, as he smelt the fragrant scent,
In time and order drove afar
All error that his hopes could mar.
Then sixteen priests together came
And cast into the sacred flame
The severed members of the horse,
Made ready all in ordered course.
On piles of holy Fig-tree raised
The meaner victims' bodies blazed:
The steed, of all the creatures slain,
Alone required a pile of cane.
Three days, as is by law decreed,
Lasted that Offering of the Steed.

The Chatushṭom began the rite,
And when the sun renewed his light,
The Ukthya followed : after came
The Atirátra's holy flame.
These were the rites, and many more,
Arranged by light of holy lore,
The Aptoryám of mighty power,
And, each performed in proper hour,
The Abhijit and Viśvajit
With every form and service fit;
And with the sacrifice at night
The Jyotishṭom and Áyus rite.[1]

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[1] A minute account of these ancient ceremonies would be out of place here. 'Agnishṭoma is the name of a sacrifice, or rather a series of offerings to fire for five days. It is the first and principal part of the Jyotishṭoma, one of the great sacrifices in which especially the juice of the Soma plant is offered for the purpose of obtaining Swarga or heaven.' GOLDSTÜCKER'S DICTIONARY. 'The *Agnishṭoma* is Agni. It is called so because they (the gods) praised him with this Stoma. They called it so to hide the proper meaning of the word; for the gods like to hide the proper meaning of words.'

'On account of four classes of gods having praised Agni with four Stomas, the whole was called *Chahtushṭoma* (containing four Stomas).'

'It (the Agnishṭoma) is called *Jyotishṭoma*, for they praised Agni when he had raisen up (to the sky) in the shape of a light (*jyotis*).'

'This (Agnishṭoma) is a sacrificial performance which has no beginning and no end.' HAUG'S *Aitareya Bráhmaṇam.*

The Atirátra, literally *lasting through the night,* is a division of the service of the Jyotishṭoma.

The Abhijit, *the everywhere victorious,* is the name of a sub-division of the great sacrifice of the Gavámanaya.

The Viśvajit, or *the all-conquering,* is a similar sub-division.

Áyus, is the name of a service forming a division of the Abhiplava sacrifice.

The *Aptoryám* is the seventh or last part of the Jyotishṭoma, for the performance of which it is not essentially necessary, but a voluntary sacrifice instituted for the attainment of a specific desire. The literal meaning of the word would be in conformity with the *Prauḍhamanoramá* 'a sacrifice which procures the attainment of the desired object.' GOLDSTÜCKER'S DICTIONARY.

The task was done, as laws prescribe:
The monarch, glory of his tribe,
Bestowed the land in liberal grants
Upon the sacred ministrants.
He gave the region of the east,
His conquest, to the Hotri priest.
The west, the celebrant obtained:
The south, the priest presiding gained:
The northern region was the share
Of him who chanted forth the prayer.[1]
Thus did each priest obtain his meed
At the great Slaughter of the Steed,
Ordained, the best of all to be,
By self-existent deity.
Ikshváku's son with joyful mind
This noble fee to each assigned,
But all the priests with one accord
Addressed that unpolluted lord:

'The *Ukthya* is a slight modification of the Agnishṭoma sacrifice. The noun to be supplied to it is *kratu*. It is a Soma sacrifice also, and one of the seven Sansthas or component parts of the Jyotishṭoma. Its name indicates its nature. For *Ukthya* means "what refers to the Uktha," which is an older name for Shastra, *i. e.* a recitation of one of the Hotṛi priests at the time of the Soma libations. Thus this sacrifice is only a kind of supplement to the Agnishṭoma.' HAUG. *Ai. B.*

[1] 'Four classes of priests were required in India at the most solemn sacrifices. 1. The officiating priests, manual labourers, and acolytes, who had chiefly to prepare the sacrificial ground, to dress the altar, slay the victims, and pour out the libations. 2. The choristers, who chant the sacred hymns. 3. The reciters or readers, who repeat certain hymns. 4. The overseers or bishops, who watch and superintend the proceedings of the other priests, and ought to be familiar with all the Vedas. The formulas and verses to be muttered by the first class are contained in the Yajur-veda-sanhitá. The hymns to be sung by the second class are in the Sama-veda-sanhitá. The Atharva-veda is said to be intended for the Brahman or overseer, who is to watch the proceedings of the sacrifice, and to remedy any mistake that may occur. The hymns to be recited by the third class are contained in the Rig-veda.' *Chips from a German Workshop.*

"'Tis thine alone to keep the whole
Of this broad earth in firm control.
No gift of lands from thee we seek:
To guard these realms our hands were weak.
On sacred lore our days are spent:
Let other gifts our wants content.'

The chief of old Ikshváku's line
Gave them ten hundred thousand kine,
A hundred millions of fine gold,
The same in silver four times told.
But every priest in presence there
With one accord resigned his share.
To Saint Vasishtha, high of soul,
And Rishyaśring they gave the whole.
That largess pleased those Bráhmans well,
Who bade the prince his wishes tell.
Then Daśaratha, mighty king,
Made answer thus to Rishyaśring:
'O holy Hermit, of thy grace,
Vouchsafe the increase of my race.'
He spoke; nor was his prayer denied:
The best of Bráhmans thus replied:
'Four sons, O Monarch, shall be thine,
Upholders of thy royal line.'

CANTO XIV.

RÁVAṆ DOOMED.

The saint, well read in holy lore,
Pondered awhile his answer o'er,
And thus again addressed the king,
His wandering thoughts regathering:
'Another rite will I begin
Which shall the sons thou cravest win,
Where all things shall be duly sped
And first Atharva texts be read.'

Then by Vibháṇḍak's gentle son
Was that high sacrifice begun,
The king's advantage seeking still
And zealous to perform his will.
Now all the Gods had gathered there,
Each one for his allotted share:
Brahmá, the ruler of the sky,
Stháṇu, Náráyaṇ, Lord most high,
And holy Indra men might view
With Maruts[3] for his retinue;
The heavenly chorister, and saint,
And spirit pure from earthly taint,
With one accord had sought the place
The high-souled monarch's rite to grace.
Then to the Gods who came to take
Their proper share the hermit spake:
'For you has Daśaratha slain
The votive steed, a son to gain;

[3] The Maruts are the winds, deified in the religion of the Veda like other mighty powers and phenomena of nature.

Stern penance-rites the king has tried,
And in firm faith on you relied,
And now with undiminished care
A second rite would fain prepare.
But, O ye Gods, consent to grant
The longing of your supplicant.
For him beseeching hands I lift,
And pray you all to grant the gift,
That four fair sons of high renown
The offerings of the king may crown.'
They to the hermit's son replied:
'His longing shall be gratified.
For, Bráhman, in most high degree
We love the king and honour thee.'

These words the Gods in answer said,
And vanished thence by Indra led.

Thus to the Lord, the worlds who made,
The Immortals all assembled prayed:
'O Brahmá, mighty by thy grace,
Rávan, who rules the giant race,
Torments us in his senseless pride,
And penance-loving saints beside.
For thou well pleased in days of old
Gavest the boon that makes him bold,
That God nor demon e'er should kill
His charmed life, for so thy will.
We, honouring that high behest,
Bear all his rage though sore distressed.
That lord of giants fierce and fell
Scourges the earth and heaven and hell.
Mad with thy boon, his impious rage
Smites saint and bard and God and sage.
The sun himself withholds his glow,
The wind in fear forbears to blow;

The fire restrains his wonted heat
Where stand the dreaded Rávaṇ's feet,
And, necklaced with the wandering wave,
The sea before him fears to rave.
Kuvera's self in sad defeat
Is driven from his blissful seat.
We see, we feel the giant's might,
And woe comes o'er us and affright.
To thee, O Lord, thy suppliants pray
To find some cure this plague to stay.'

Thus by the gathered Gods addressed
He pondered in his secret breast,
And said: 'One only way I find
To slay this fiend of evil mind.
He prayed me once his life to guard
From demon, God, and heavenly bard,
And spirits of the earth and air,
And I consenting heard his prayer.
But the proud giant in his scorn
Recked not of man of woman born.
None else may take his life away,
But only man the fiend may slay.'

The Gods, with Indra at their head,
Rejoiced to hear the words he said.
Then, crowned with glory like a flame,
Lord Vishṇu to the council came;
His hands shell, mace, and discus bore,
And saffron were the robes he wore.
Riding his eagle through the crowd,
As the sun rides upon a cloud,
With bracelets of fine gold, he came
Loud welcomed by the Gods' acclaim.
His praise they sang with one consent,
And cried, in lowly reverence bent:

'O Lord whose hand fierce Madhu[1] slew,
Be thou our refuge, firm and true;
Friend of the suffering worlds art thou,
We pray thee help thy suppliants now.'
Then Vishṇu spake: 'Ye Gods, declare,
What may I do to grant your prayer?'

'King Daśaratha', thus cried they,
'Fervent in penance many a day,
The sacrificial steed has slain,
Longing for sons, but all in vain.
Now, at the cry of us forlorn,
Incarnate as his seed be born.
Three queens has he: each lovely dame
Like Beauty, Modesty, or Fame.
Divide thyself in four, and be
His offspring by these noble three.
Man's nature take, and slay in fight
Rávaṇ who laughs at heavenly might:
This common scourge, this rankling thorn
Whom the three worlds too long have borne.
For Rávaṇ in the senseless pride
Of might unequalled has defied
The host of heaven, and plagues with woe
Angel and bard and saint below,
Crushing each spirit and each maid
Who plays in Nandan's [2]heavenly shade.
O conquering Lord, to thee we bow;
Our surest hope and trust art thou.
Regard the world of men below,
And slay the Gods' tremendous foe.'

When thus the suppliant Gods had prayed,

[1] A Titan or fiend whose destruction has given Vishṇu one of his well-known titles, Mádhava.

[2] The garden of Indra.

His wise reply Náráyaṇ[1] made:
'What task demands my presence there,
And whence this dread, ye Gods declare.'

The Gods replied: 'We fear, O Lord,
Fierce Rávaṇ, ravener abhorred.
Be thine the glorious task, we pray,
In human form this fiend to slay.
By thee of all the Blest alone
This sinner may be overthrown.
He gained by penance long and dire
The favour of the mighty Sire.
Then He who every gift bestows
Guarded the fiend from heavenly foes,
And gave a pledge his life that kept
From all things living, man except.
On him thus armed no other foe
Than man may deal the deadly blow.
Assume, O King, a mortal birth,
And strike the demon to the earth.'

Then Vishṇu, God of Gods, the Lord
Supreme by all the worlds adored,
To Brahmá and the suppliants spake:
'Dismiss your fear: for your dear sake
In battle will I smite him dead,
The cruel fiend, the Immortals' dread.
And lords and ministers and all
His kith and kin with him shall fall.
Then, in the world of mortal men,
Ten thousand years and hundreds ten
I as a human king will reign,
And guard the earth as my domain.'

---

[1] One of the most ancient and popular of the numerous names of Vishṇu. The word has been derived in several ways, and may mean *he who moved on the (primordial) waters*, or *he who pervades or influences men or their thoughts.*

God, saint, and nymph, and ministrel throng
With heavenly voices raised their song
In hymns of triumph to the God
Whose conquering feet on Madhu trod:

'Champion of Gods, as man appear,
This cruel Rávaṇ slay,
The thorn that saints and hermits fear,
The plague that none can stay.
In savage fury uncontrolled
His pride for ever grows:
He dares the Lord of Gods to hold
Among his deadly foes.'

CANTO XV.

THE NECTAR.

When wisest Vishṇu thus had given
His promise to the Gods of heaven,
He pondered in his secret mind
A suited place of birth to find.
Then he decreed, the lotus-eyed,
In four his being to divide,
And Daśaratha, gracious king,
He chose as sire from whom to spring.
That childless prince, of high renown,
Who smote in war his foemen down,
At that same time with utmost care
Prepared the rite that wins an heir.[1]
Then Vishṇu, fain on earth to dwell,
Bade the Almighty Sire farewell,
And vanished while a reverent crowd
Of Gods and saints in worship bowed.

The monarch watched the sacred rite,
When a vast form of awful might,
Of matchless splendour, strength, and size
Was manifest before his eyes.
From forth the sacrificial flame,
Dark, robed in red, the being came.
His voice was drumlike, loud and low,
His face suffused with rosy glow.
Like a huge lion's mane appeared
The long locks of his hair and beard.
He shone with many a lucky sign,

[1] The Horse-Sacrifice, just described.

And many an ornament divine;
A towering mountain in his height,
A tiger in his gait and might.
No precious mine more rich could be,
No burning flame more bright than he.
His arms embraced in loving hold,
Like a dear wife, a vase of gold
Whose silver lining held a draught
Of nectar as in heaven is quaffed:
A vase so vast, so bright to view,
They scarce could count the vision true.
Upon the king his eyes he bent,
And said: 'The Lord of life has sent
His servant down, O Prince, to be
A messenger from heaven to thee.'
The king with all his nobles by
Raised reverent hands and made reply:
'Welcome, O glorious being! Say
How can my care thy grace repay.'
Envoy of Him whom all adore
Thus to the king he spake once more:
'The Gods accept thy worship: they
Give thee the blessed fruit to-day.
Approach and take, O glorious King,
This heavenly nectar which I bring,
For it shall give thee sons and wealth,
And bless thee with a store of health.
Give it to those fair queens of thine,
And bid them quaff the drink divine:
And they the princely sons shall bear
Long sought by sacrifice and prayer.'

'Yea, O my lord,' the monarch said,
And took the vase upon his head,
The gift of Gods, of fine gold wrought,

With store of heavenly liquor fraught.
He honoured, filled with transport new,
That wondrous being, fair to view,
As round the envoy of the God
With reverential steps he trod.[1]
His errand done, that form of light
Arose and vanished from the sight.
High rapture filled the monarch's soul,
Possessed of that celestial bowl,
As when a man by want distressed
With unexpected wealth is blest.
And rays of transport seemed to fall
Illuminating bower and hall,
As when the autumn moon rides high,
And floods with lovely light the sky.
Quick to the ladies' bower he sped,
And thus to Queen Kauśalyá said:
'This genial nectar take and quaff,'
He spoke, and gave the lady half.
Part of the nectar that remained
Sumitrá from his hand obtained.
He gave, to make her fruitful too,
Kaikeyí half the residue.
A portion yet remaining there,
He paused awhile to think,

---

[1] To walk round an object keeping the right side towards it is a mark of great respect. The Sanskrit word for the observance is *pradakshiṇá*, from pra pro, and *daksha* right, Greek δεξίος, Latin dexter, Gaelic deas-il. A similar ceremony is observed by the Gaels.

'In the meantime she traced around him, with wavering steps, the propitiation, which some have thought has been derived from the Druidical mythology. It consists, as is well known, in the person who makes the *deasil* walking three times round the person who is the object of the ceremony, taking care to move according to the course of the sun.'

Scott. *The Two Drovers.*

Then gave Sumitrá, with her share,
  The remnant of the drink.
Thus on each queen of those fair three
  A part the king bestowed,
And with sweet hope a child to see
  Their yearning bosoms glowed.
The heavenly bowl the king supplied
  Their longing souls relieved,
And soon, with rapture and with pride,
  Each royal dame conceived.
He gazed upon each lady's face,
  And triumphed as he gazed,
As Indra in his royal place
  By Gods and spirits praised.

CANTO XVI.

THE VÁNARS.

When Vishṇu thus had gone on earth,
From the great king to take his birth,
The self-existent Lord of all
Addressed the Gods who heard his call:
'For Vishṇu's sake, the strong and true,
Who seeks the good of all of you,
Make helps, in war to lend him aid,
In forms that change at will, arrayed,
Of wizard skill and hero might,
Outstrippers of the wind in flight,
Skilled in the arts of counsel, wise,
And Vishṇu's peers in bold emprise;
With heavenly arts and prudence fraught,
By no devices to be caught;
Skilled in all weapons' lore and use
As they who drink the immortal juice.[1]
And let the nymphs supreme in grace,
And maidens of the minstrel race,
Monkeys and snakes, and those who rove
Free spirits of the hill and grove,
And wandering Daughters of the Air,
In monkey form brave children bear.
So erst the lord of bears I shaped,
Born from my mouth as wide I gaped.'

Thus by the mighty Sire addressed
They all obeyed his high behest,

[1] The *Amrit*, the nectar of the Indian Gods.

And thus begot in countless swarms
Brave sons disguised in sylvan forms.
Each God, each sage became a sire,
Each minstrel of the heavenly quire,[1]
Each faun,[2] of children strong and good
Whose feet should roam the hill and wood.
Snakes, bards,[3] and spirits,[4] serpents bold
Had sons too numerous to be told.
Báli, the woodland hosts who led,
High as Mahendra's[5] lofty head,
Was Indra's child. That noblest fire,
The Sun, was great Sugríva's sire.
Tára, the mighty monkey, he
Was offspring of Vrihaspati:[6]
Tára the matchless chieftain, boast
For wisdom of the Vánar host.
Of Gandhamádan brave and bold
The father was the Lord of Gold.

---

[1] *Gandharvas* (Southey's Glendoveers) are celestial musicians inhabiting Indra's heaven and forming the orchestra at all the banquets of the principal deities.

[2] *Yakshas*, demigods attendant especially on Kuvera, and employed by him in the care of his garden and treasures.

[3] *Kimpurushas*, demigods attached also to the service of Kuvera, celestial musicians, represented like centaurs reversed with human figures and horses' heads.

[4] *Siddhas*, demigods or spirits of undefined attributes, occupying with the *Vidyádharas* the middle air or region between the earth and the sun.

Schlegel translates: 'Divi, Sapientes, Fidicines, Præpetes, illustres Genii, Præconesque procrearunt natos, masculos, silvicolas; angues porro, Hippocephali, Beati, Aligeri, Serpentesque frequentes alacriter generavere prolem innumerabilem.'

[5] A mountain in the south of India.

[6] The preceptor of the Gods and regent of the planet Jupiter.

Nala the mighty, dear to fame,
Of skilful Viśvakarmá[1] came.
From Agni, [2]Níla bright as flame,
Who in his splendour, might, and worth,
Surpassed the sire who gave him birth.
The heavenly Aśvins,[3] swift and fair,
Were fathers of a noble pair,
Who, Dwivida and Mainda named,
For beauty like their sires were famed.
Varuṇ[4] was father of Susheṇ,
Of Śarabh, he who sends the rain.[5]
Hanumán, best of monkey kind,
Was son of him who breathes the wind:
Like thunderbolt in frame was he,
And swift as Garuḍ's[6] self could flee.
These thousands did the Gods create
Endowed with might that none could mate,
In monkey forms that changed at will:
So strong their wish the fiend to kill.
In mountain size, like lions thewed,
Up sprang the wondrous multitude,
Auxiliar hosts in every shape,
Monkey and bear and highland ape.

---

[1] The celestial architect, the Indian Hephæstus, Mulciber, or Vulcan.

[2] The God of Fire.

[3] Twin children of the Sun, the physicians of Swarga or Indra's heaven.

[4] The deity of the waters.

[5] Parjanya, sometimes confounded with Indra.

[6] The bird and vehicle of Vishṇu. He is generally represented as a being something between a man and a bird and considered as the sovereign of the feathered race. He may be compared with the Símurgh of the Persians, the 'Anká of the Arabs, the Griffin of chivalry, the Phœnix of Egypt, and the bird that sits upon the ash Yggdrasil of the Edda.

In each the strength, the might, the mien
Of his own parent God were seen.
Some chiefs of Vánar mothers came,
Some of she-bear and minstrel dame,
Skilled in all arms in battle's shock,
The brandished tree, the loosened rock;
And prompt, should other weapons fail,
To fight and slay with tooth and nail.
Their strength could shake the hills amain,
And rend the rooted trees in twain,
Disturb with their impetuous sweep
The Rivers' Lord, the Ocean deep,
Rend with their feet the seated ground,
And pass wide floods with airy bound,
Or forcing through the sky their way
The very clouds by force could stay.
Mad elephants that wander through
The forest wilds, could they subdue,
And with their furious shout could scare
Dead upon earth the birds of air.
So were the sylvan chieftains formed;
Thousands on thousands still they swarmed.
These were the leaders honoured most,
The captains of the Vánar host,
And to each lord and chief and guide
Was monkey offspring born beside.
Then by the bears' great monarch stood
The other roamers of the wood,
And turned, their pathless homes to seek,
To forest and to mountain peak.
The leaders of the monkey band
By the two brothers took their stand,
Sugríva, offspring of the Sun,
And Báli, Indra's mighty one.

They both endowed with Garuḍ's might,
And skilled in all the arts of fight,
Wandered in arms the forest through,
And lions, snakes, and tigers, slew.
But every monkey, ape, and bear
Ever was Báli's special care;
With his vast strength and mighty arm
He kept them from all scathe and harm.
And so the earth with hill, wood, seas,
Was filled with mighty ones like these,
Of various shape and race and kind,
With proper homes to each assigned.
With Ráma's champions fierce and strong
The earth was overspread,
High as the hills and clouds, a throng
With bodies vast and dread.[1]

[1] This Canto will appear ridiculous to the European reader. But it should be remembered that the monkeys of an Indian forest, the 'bough-deer' as the poets call them, are very different animals from the 'turpissima bestia' that accompanies the itinerant organ-grinder or grins in the Zoological Gardens of London. Milton has made his hero, Sátan, assume the forms of a cormorant, a toad, and a serpent, and I cannot see that this creation of semi-divine Vánars, or monkeys, is more ridiculous or undignified.

CANTO XVII.

RISHYAŚRING'S RETURN.

Now when the high-souled monarch's rite,
The Aśvamedh, was finished quite,
Their sacrificial dues obtained,
The Gods their heavenly homes regained.
The lofty-minded saints withdrew,
Each to his place, with honour due,
And kings and chieftains, one and all,
Who came to grace the festival.
And Daśaratha, ere they went,
Addressed them thus benevolent:
'Now may you, each with joyful heart,
To your own realms, O Kings, depart.
Peace and good luck attend you there,
And blessing, is my friendly prayer;
Let cares of state each mind engage
To guard his royal heritage.
A monarch from his throne expelled
No better than the dead is held.
So he who cares for power and might
Must guard his realm and royal right.
Such care a meed in heaven will bring
Better than rites and offering.
Such care a king his country owes
As man upon himself bestows,
When for his body he provides
Raiment and every need besides.
For future days should kings foresee,
And keep the present error-free.'

Thus did the king the kings exhort:
They heard, and turned them from the court,
And, each to each in friendship bound,
Went forth to all the realms around.
The rites were o'er, the guests were sped:
The train the best of Bráhmans led,
In which the king with joyful soul,
With his dear wives, and with the whole
Of his imperial host and train
Of cars and servants turned again,
And, as a monarch dear to fame,
Within his royal city came.

Next, Rishyaśring, well-honoured sage,
And Śántá, sought their hermitage.
The king himself, of prudent mind,
Attended him, with troops behind,
And all her men the town outpoured
With Saint Vaśishṭha and their lord.
High mounted on a car of state,
O'ercanopied fair Śántá sate,
Drawn by white oxen, while a band
Of servants marched on either hand.
Great gifts of countless price she bore,
With sheep and goats and gems in store.
Like Beauty's self the lady shone
With all the jewels she had on,
As, happy in her sweet content,
Peerless amid the fair she went.
Not Queen Paulomí's [1] self could be
More loving to her lord than she.
She who had lived in happy ease,
Honoured with all her heart could please,

[1] The consort of Indra, called also Śachí and Indráṇí.

While dames and kinsfolk ever vied
To see her wishes gratified,
Soon as she knew her husband's will
Again to seek the forest, still
Was ready for the hermit's cot,
Nor murmured at her altered lot.
The king attended to the wild
That hermit and his own dear child,
And in the centre of a throng
Of noble courtiers rode along.
The sage's son had let prepare
A lodge within the wood, and there
Awhile they lingered blithe and gay,
Then, duly honoured, went their way.
The glorious hermit Rishyaśring
Drew near and thus besought the king:
'Return, my honoured lord, I pray,
Return, upon thy homeward way.'
The monarch, with the waiting crowd,
Lifted his voice and wept aloud,
And with eyes dripping still to each
Of his good queens he spake this speech:
'Kauśalyá and Sumitrá dear,
And thou, my sweet Kaikeyí, hear.
All upon Śántá feast your gaze,
The last time for a length of days.'
To Śántá's arms the ladies leapt,
And hung about her neck and wept,
And cried, 'O, happy be the life
Of this great Bráhman and his wife.
The Wind, the Fire, the Moon on high,
The Earth, the Streams, the circling Sky,
Preserve thee in the wood, true spouse,
Devoted to thy husband's vows.

And O dear Śántá, ne'er neglect
To pay the dues of meek respect
To the great saint, thy husband's sire,
With all observance and with fire.
And, sweet one, pure of spot and blame,
Forget not thou thy husband's claim;
In every change, in good and ill,
Let thy sweet words delight him still,
And let thy worship constant be:
Her lord is woman's deity.
To learn thy welfare, dearest friend,
The king will many a Bráhman send.
Let happy thoughts thy spirit cheer,
And be not troubled, daughter dear.'

These soothing words the ladies said,
And pressed their lips upon her head.
Each gave with sighs her last adieu,
Then at the king's command withdrew.
The king around the hermit went
With circling footsteps reverent,
And placed at Rishyaśring's command
Some soldiers of his royal band.
The Bráhman bowed in turn and cried,
'May fortune never leave thy side.
O mighty King, with justice reign,
And still thy people's love retain.'
He spoke, and turned away his face,
And, as the hermit went,
The monarch, rooted to the place,
Pursued with eyes intent.
But when the sage had past from view
King Daśaratha turned him too,
Still fixing on his friend each thought,
With such deep love his breast was fraught.

Amid his people's loud acclaim
Home to his royal seat he came,
And lived delighted there,
Expecting when each queenly dame,
Upholder of his ancient fame,
Her promised son should bear.
The glorions sage his way pursued
Till close before his eyes he viewed
Sweet Champá, Lomapád's fair town,
Wreathed with her Champacs'[1] leafy crown.
Soon as the saint's approach he knew,
The king, to yield him honour due,
Went forth to meet him with a band
Of priests and nobles of the land:
'Hail, Sage,' he cried, 'O joy to me!
What bliss it is, my lord, to see
Thee with thy wife and all thy train
Returning to my town again.
Thy father, honoured Sage, is well,
Who hither from his woodland cell
Has sent full many a messenger
For tidings both of thee and her.'
Then joyfully, for due respect,
The monarch bade the town be decked.
The king and Rishyaśring elate
Entered the royal city's gate:
In front the chaplain rode.
Then, loved and honoured with all care
By monarch and by courtier, there
The glorious saint abode.

---

[1] The *Michelia champaca.* It bears a scented yellow blossom:
'The maid of India blest again to hold
In her full lap the Champac's leaves of gold.' *Lallah Rookh.*

CANTO XVIII.

RISHYAŚRING'S DEPARTURE.

The monarch called a Bráhman near
And said, 'Now speed away
To Kaśyap's son,[1] the mighty seer,
And with all reverence say
The holy child he holds so dear,
The hermit of the noble mind,
Whose equal it were hard to find,
Returned, is dwelling here.
Go, and instead of me do thou
Before that best of hermits bow,
That still he may, for his dear son,
Show me the favour I have won.'
Soon as the king these words had said,
To Kaśyap's son the Bráhman sped.
Before the hermit low he bent
And did obeisance, reverent;
Then with meek words his grace to crave
The message of his lord he gave:
'The high-souled father of his bride
Had called thy son his rites to guide:
Those rites are o'er, the steed is slain;
Thy noble child is come again.'

Soon as the saint that speech had heard
His spirit with desire was stirred
To seek the city of the king
And to his cot his son to bring.

[1] Vibhándak, the father of Rishyaśring.

With young disciples at his side
Forth on his way the hermit hied,
While peasants from their hamlets ran
To reverence the holy man.
Each with his little gift of food,
Forth came the village multitude,
And, as they humbly bowed the head,
'What may we do for thee?' they said.
Then he, of Bráhmans first and best,
The gathered people thus addressed:
'Now tell me, for I fain would know,
Why is it I am honoured so?'
They to the high-souled saint replied:
'Our ruler is with thee allied.
Our master's order we fulfil;
O Bráhman, let thy mind be still.'

With joy the saintly hermit heard
Each pleasant and delightful word,
And poured a benediction down
On king and ministers and town.
Glad at the words of that high saint
Some servants hastened to acquaint
Their king, rejoicing to impart
The tidings that would cheer his heart.
Soon as the joyful tale he knew
To meet the saint the monarch flew,
The guest-gift in his hand he brought,
And bowed before him and besought:
'This day by seeing thee I gain
Not to have lived my life in vain.
Now be not wroth with me, I pray,
Because I wiled thy son away.'[1]

---

[1] A hemiśloka is wanting in Schlegel's text, which he thus fills up in his Latin translation.

The best of Bráhmans answer made:
'Be not, great lord of kings, afraid.
Thy virtues have not failed to win
My favour, O thou pure of sin.'
Then in the front the saint was placed,
The king came next in joyous haste,
And with him entered his abode,
Mid glad acclaim as on they rode.
To greet the sage the reverent crowd
Raised suppliant hands and humbly bowed.
Then from the palace many a dame
Following well-dressed Śántá came,
Stood by the mighty saint and cried:
'See, honour's source, thy son's dear bride.'
The saint, who every virtue knew,
His arms around his daughter threw,
And with a father's rapture pressed
The lady to his wondering breast.
Arising from the saint's embrace
She bowed her low before his face,
And then, with palm to palm applied,
Stood by her hermit father's side.
He for his son, as laws ordain,
Performed the rite that frees from stain,[1]
And, honoured by the wise and good,
With him departed to the wood.

---

[1] Rishyaśring, a Bráhman, had married Śántá who was of the Kshatriya or Warrior caste and an expiatory ceremony was necessary on account of this violation of the law.

CANTO XIX.

THE BIRTH OF THE PRINCES.

The seasons six in rapid flight
Had circled since that glorious rite.
Eleven months had passed away;
'Twas Chaitra's ninth returning day.[1]
The moon within that mansion shone
Which Aditi looks kindly on.
Raised to their apex in the sky
Five brilliant planets beamed on high.
Shone with the moon, in Cancer's sign,
Vrihaspati[2] with light divine.
Kauśalyá bore an infant blest
With heavenly marks of grace impressed;
Ráma, the universe's lord,
A prince by all the worlds adored.

---

[1] 'The poet no doubt intended to indicate the vernal equinox as the birthday of Ráma. For the month *Chaitra* is the first of the two months assigned to the spring; it corresponds with the latter half of March and the former half of April in our division of the year. *Aditi*, the mother of the Gods, is lady of the seventh lunar mansion which is called *Punarvasu*. The five planets and their positions in the Zodiac are thus enumerated by both commentators: the Sun in Aries, Mars in Capricorn, Saturn in Libra, Jupiter in Cancer, Venus in Pisces. ....I leave to astronomers to examine whether the parts of the description agree with one another, and, if this be the case, thence to deduce the date. The Indians place the nativity of Ráma in the confines of the second age (tretá) and the third (dwápara): but it seems that this should be taken in an allegorical sense............We may consider that the poet had an eye to the time in which, immediately before his own age, the aspects of the heavenly bodies were such as he has described.' SCHLEGEL.

[2] The regent of the planet Jupiter.

New glory Queen Kauśalyá won
Reflected from her splendid son.
So Aditi shone more and more,
The Mother of the Gods, when she
The King of the Immortals[1] bore,
The thunder-wielding deity.
The lotus-eyed, the beauteous boy,
He came fierce Rávaṇ to destroy;
From half of Vishṇu's vigour born,
He came to help the worlds forlorn.
And Queen Kaikeyí bore a child
Of truest valour, Bharat styled,
With every princely virtue blest,
One fourth of Vishṇu manifest.
Sumitrá too a noble pair,
Called Lakshman and Śatrughna, bare,
Of high emprise, devoted, true,
Sharers in Vishṇu's essence too.
'Neath Pushya's[2] mansion, Mína's[3] sign,
Was Bharat born, of soul benign.
The sun had reached the Crab at morn
When Queen Sumitrá's babes were born,
What time the moon had gone to make
His nightly dwelling with the Snake.
The high-souled monarch's consorts bore
At different times those glorious four,
Like to himself and virtuous, bright
As Proshṭhapadá's[4] four-fold light.

[1] Indra = Jupiter Tonans.

[2] '*Pushya* is the name of a month; but here it means the eighth mansion. The ninth is called *Asleshá*, or the snake. It is evident from this that Bharat, though his birth is mentioned before that of the twins, was the youngest of the four brothers and Ráma's junior by eleven months.' SCHLEGEL.

[3] A fish, the Zodiacal sign *Pisces*.

[4] One of the constellations, containing stars in the wing of Pegasus.

Then danced the nymphs' celestial throng,
  The minstrels raised their strain;
The drums of heaven pealed loud and long,
  And flowers came down in rain.
Within Ayodhyá, blithe and gay,
All kept the joyous holiday.
The spacious square, the ample road
With mimes and dancers overflowed,
And with the voice of music rang
Where minstrels played and singers sang,
And shone, a wonder to behold,
With dazzling show of gem and gold.
Nor did the king his largess spare,
For minstrel, driver, bard, to share;
Much wealth the Bráhmans bore away,
And many thousand kine that day.
  Soon as each babe was twelve days old
'Twas time the naming rite to hold,
When Saint Vaśishṭha, rapt with joy,
Assigned a name to every boy.
Ráma, to him the high-souled heir,
Bharat, to him Kaikeyí bare:
Of Queen Sumitrá one fair son
Was Lakshmaṇ, and Śatrughna[1] one.
Ráma, his sire's supreme delight,
Like some proud banner cheered his sight,
And to all creatures seemed to be
The self-existent deity.
All heroes, versed in holy lore,
To all mankind great love they bore.
Fair stores of wisdom all possessed,
With princely graces all were blest.

[1] Ráma means the Delight (of the World); Bharat, the Supporter; Lakshmaṇ, the Auspicious; Śatrughna, the Slayer of Foes.

But mid those youths of high descent,
With lordly light preëminent,
Like the full moon unclouded, shone
Ráma, the world's dear paragon.
He best the elephant could guide,[2]
Urge the fleet car, the charger ride:
A master he of bowman's skill,
Joying to do his father's will.
The world's delight and darling, he
Loved Lakshmaṇ best from infancy;
And Lakshmaṇ, lord of lofty fate,
Upon his elder joyed to wait,
Striving his second self to please
With friendship's sweet observances.
His limbs the hero ne'er would rest
Unless the couch his brother pressed;
Except beloved Ráma shared
He could not taste the meal prepared.
When Ráma, pride of Raghu's race,
Sprang on his steed to urge the chase,
Behind him Lakshmaṇ loved to go
And guard him with his trusty bow.
As Ráma was to Lakshmaṇ dear
More than his life and ever near,
So fond Śatrughna prized above
His very life his Bharat's love.
Illustrious heroes, nobly kind
In mutual love they all combined,
And gave their royal sire delight
With modest grace and warrior might:

[2] Schlegel, in the *Indische Bibliothek*, remarks that the proficiency of the Indians in this art early attracted the attention of Alexander's successors, and natives of India were so long exclusively employed in this service that the name Indian was applied to any elephant-driver, to whatever country he might belong.

Supported by the glorious four
Shone Daśaratha more and more,
As though, with every guardian God
Who keeps the land and skies,
The Father of all creatures trod
The earth before men's eyes.

CANTO XX.

VIŚVÁMITRA'S VISIT.

Now Daśaratha's pious mind
Meet wedlock for his sons designed ;
With priests and friends the king began
To counsel and prepare his plan.
Such thoughts engaged his bosom, when,
To see Ayodhyá's lord of men,
A mighty saint of glorious fame,
The hermit Viśvámitra[1] came.
For evil fiends that roam by night
Disturbed him in each holy rite,
And in their strength and frantic rage
Assailed with witcheries the sage.
He came to seek the monarch's aid
To guard the rites the demons stayed,
Unable to a close to bring
One unpolluted offering.
Seeking the king in this dire strait
He said to those who kept the gate :
'Haste, warders, to your master run,
And say that here stands Gădhi's son.'
Soon as they heard the holy man,
To the king's chamber swift they ran
With minds disordered all, and spurred
To wildest zeal by what they heard.
On to the royal hall they sped,
There stood and lowly bowed the head,

[1] The story of this famous saint is given at sufficient length in Cantos LI—LV.

And made the lord of men aware
That the great saint was waiting there.
  The king with priest and peer arose
And ran the sage to meet,
  As Indra from his palace goes
Lord Brahmá's self to greet.
When glowing with celestial light
The pious hermit was in sight,
The king, whose mien his transport showed,
The honoured gift for guests bestowed.
Nor did the saint that gift despise,
Offered as holy texts advise;
He kindly asked the earth's great king
How all with him was prospering.
The son of Kuśik[1] bade him tell
If all in town and field were well,
All well with friends, and kith and kin,
And royal treasure stored within:
'Do all thy neighbours own thy sway?
  Thy foes confess thee yet?
Dost thou continue still to pay
  To Gods and men each debt?'
Then he, of hermits first and best,
Vaśishṭha with a smile[2] addressed,
And asked him of his welfare too,
Showing him honour as was due.
Then with the sainted hermit all
Went joyous to the monarch's hall,

[1] This saint has given his name to the district and city to the east of Benares. The original name, preserved in a land-grant on copper now in the Museum of the Benares College, has been Moslemized into Ghazeepore (the City of the Soldier-martyr).

[2] The son of Kuśik is Viśvámitra.

[3] At the recollection of their former enmity, to be described hereafter.

And sate them down by due degree,
Each one, of rank and dignity.
Joy filled the noble prince's breast
Who thus bespoke the honoured guest:
'As amrit[1] by a mortal found,
As rain upon the thirsty ground,
As to an heirless man a son
Born to him of his precious one,
As gain of what we sorely miss,
As sudden dawn of mighty bliss,
So is thy coming here to me:
All welcome, mighty Saint, to thee.
What wish within thy heart hast thou?
If I can please thee, tell me how.
Hail, Saint, from whom all honours flow,
Worthy of all I can bestow.
Blest is my birth with fruit to-day,
Nor has my life been thrown away.
I see the best of Bráhman race,
And night to glorious morn gives place.
Thou, holy Sage, in days of old
Among the royal saints enrolled,
Didst, penance-glorified, within
The Bráhman caste high station win.
'Tis meet and right in many a way
That I to thee should honour pay.
This seems a marvel to mine eyes:
All sin thy visit purifies;
And I by seeing thee, O Sage,
Have reaped the fruit of pilgrimage.
Then say what thou wouldst have me do,
That thou hast sought this interview.
Favoured by thee, my wish is still,

[1] The Indian nectar or drink of the Gods.

O Hermit, to perform thy will.
Nor needest thou at length explain
The object that thy heart would gain.
Without reserve I grant it now :
My deity, O Lord, art thou.'
 The glorious hermit, far renowned,
With highest fame and virtue crowned,
Rejoiced these modest words to hear
Delightful to the mind and ear.

CANTO XXI.

VIŚVÁMITRA'S SPEECH.

The hermit heard with high content
That speech so wondrous eloquent,
And while each hair with joy arose,[1]
He thus made answer at the close:
'Good is thy speech O noble King,
And like thyself in everything.
So should their lips be wisdom-fraught
Whom kings begot, Vaśishṭha taught.
The favour which I came to seek
Thou grantest ere my tongue can speak.
But let my tale attention claim,
And hear the need for which I came.
O King, as Scripture texts allow,
A holy rite employs me now.
Two fiends who change their forms at will
Impede that rite with cursed skill.[2]
Oft when the task is nigh complete,
These worst of fiends my toil defeat,
Throw bits of bleeding flesh, and o'er
The altar shed a stream of gore.
When thus the rite is mocked and stayed,
And all my pious hopes delayed,

---

[1] Great joy, according to the Hindu belief, has this effect, not causing each particular hair to stand on end, but gently raising all the down upon the body.

[2] The Rákshasas, giants, or fiends who are represented as disturbing the sacrifice, signify here, as often elsewhere, merely the savage tribes which placed themselves in hostile opposition to Bráhmanical institutions.

Cast down in heart the spot I leave,
And spent with fruitless labour grieve.
Nor can I, checked by prudence, dare
Let loose my fury on them there:
The muttered curse, the threatening word,
In such a rite must ne'er be heard.
Thy grace the rite from check can free,
And yield the fruit I long to see.
Thy duty bids thee, King, defend
The suffering guest, the suppliant friend.
Give me thy son, thine eldest born,
Whom locks like ravens' wings adorn.
That hero youth, the truly brave,
Of thee, O glorious King, I crave.
For he can lay those demons low
Who mar my rites and work me woe:
My power shall shield the youth from harm,
And heavenly might shall nerve his arm.
And on my champion will I shower
Unnumbered gifts of varied power,
Such gifts as shall ensure his fame
And spread through all the worlds his name.
Be sure those fiends can never stand
Before the might of Ráma's hand,
And mid the best and bravest none
Can slay that pair but Raghu's son.
Entangled in the toils of Fate
Those sinners, proud and obstinate,
Are, in their fury overbold,
No match for Ráma mighty-souled.
Nor let a father's breast give way
Too far to fond affection's sway.
Count thou the fiends already slain:
My word is pledged, nor pledged in vain.

I know the hero Ráma well
In whom high thoughts and valour dwell;
So does Vaśishṭha, so do these
Engaged in long austerities.
If thou would do the righteous deed,
And win high fame, thy virtue's meed,
Fame that on earth shall last and live,
To me, great King, thy Ráma give.
If to the words that I have said,
With Saint Vaśishṭha at their head
Thy holy men, O King, agree,
Then let thy Ráma go with me.
Ten nights my sacrifice will last,
And ere the stated time be past,
Those wicked fiends, those impious twain,
Must fall by wondrous Ráma slain.
Let not the hours, I warn thee, fly,
Fixt for the rite, unheeded by;
Good luck have thou, O royal Chief,
Nor give thy heart to needless grief.'

Thus in fair words with virtue fraught
The pious glorious saint besought.
But the good speech with poignant sting
Pierced ear and bosom of the king,
Who, stabbed with pangs too sharp to bear,
Fell prostrate and lay fainting there.

CANTO XXII.

DAŚARATHA'S SPEECH.

His tortured senses all astray;
Awhile the hapless monarch lay,
Then slowly gathering thought and strength
To Viśvámitra spoke at length :
'My son is but a child, I ween ;
This year he will be just sixteen.
How is he fit for such emprise,
My darling with the lotus eyes?
A mighty army will I bring
That calls me master, lord, and king,
And with its countless squadrons fight
Against these rovers of the night.
My faithful heroes skilled to wield
The arms of war will take the field ;
Their skill the demons' might may break :
Ráma, my child, thou must not take.
I, even I, my bow in hand,
Will in the van of battle stand,
And, while my soul is left alive,
With the night-roaming demons strive.
Thy guarded sacrifice shall be
Completed, from all hindrance free.
Thither will I my journey make :
Ráma, my child, thou must not take.
A boy unskilled, he knows not yet
The bounds to strength and weakness set.
No match is he for demon foes
Who magic arts to arms oppose.
O chief of saints, I have no power,

Of Ráma reft, to live one hour:
Mine aged heart at once would break:
Ráma, my child, thou must not take.
Nine thousand circling years have fled
With all their seasons o'er my head,
And as a hard-won boon, O Sage,
These sons have come to cheer mine age.
My dearest love amid the four
Is he whom first his mother bore,
Still dearer for his virtues' sake:
Ráma, my child, thou must not take.
But if, unmoved by all I say,
Thou needs must bear my son away,
Let me lead with him, I entreat,
A four-fold army[1] all complete.
What is the demons' might, O Sage?
Who are they? What their parentage?
What is their size? What beings lend
Their power to guard them and befriend?
How can my son their arts withstand?
Or I or all my armed band?
Tell me the whole that I may know
To meet in war each evil foe
Whom conscious might inspires with pride.'

And Viśvámitra thus replied:
'Sprung from Pulastya's race there came
A giant known by Rávaṇ's name.
Once favoured by the Eternal Sire
He plagues the worlds in ceaseless ire,
For peerless power and might renowned,
By giant bands encompassed round.
Viśravas for his sire they hold,
His brother is the Lord of Gold.

[1] Consisting of horse, foot, chariots, and elephants.

King of the giant hosts is he,
And worst of all in cruelty.
This Rávan's dread commands impel
Two demons who in might excel,
Márícha and Suváhu hight,
To trouble and impede the rite.'
Then thus the king addressed the sage:
'No power have I, my lord, to wage
War with this evil-minded foe;
Now pity on my darling show,
And upon me of hapless fate,
For thee as God I venerate.
Gods, spirits, bards of heavenly birth,[1]
The birds of air, the snakes of earth
Before the might of Rávan quail,
Much less can mortal man avail.
He draws, I hear, from out the breast
The valour of the mightiest.
No, ne'er can I with him contend,
Or with the forces he may send.
How can I then my darling lend,
Godlike, unskilled in battle? No,
I will not let my young child go.
Foes of thy rite, those mighty ones,
Sunda and Upasunda's sons,
Are fierce as Fate to overthrow:
I will not let my young child go.
Márícha and Suváhu fell
Are valiant and instructed well.
One of the twain I might attack
With all my friends their lord to back.'

---

[1] 'The Gandharvas, or heavenly bards, had originally a warlike character but were afterwards reduced to the office of celestial musicians cheering the banquets of the Gods. Dr. Kuhn has shown their identity with the Centaurs in name, origin, and attributes.' GORRESIO.

CANTO XXIII.

VAŚISHṬHA'S SPEECH.

While thus the hapless monarch spoke,
Paternal love his utterance broke.
Then words like these the saint returned,
And fury in his bosom burned:
'Didst thou, O King, a promise make,
And wishest now thy word to break?
A son of Raghu's line should scorn
To fail in faith, a man forsworn.
But if thy soul can bear the shame
I will return e'en as I came.
Live with thy sons, and joy be thine,
False scion of Kakutstha's line.'
As Viśvámitra, mighty sage,
Was moved with this tempestuous rage,
Earth rocked and reeled throughout her frame,
And fear upon the Immortals came.
But Saint Vaśishṭha, wisest seer,
Observant of his vows austere,
Saw the whole world convulsed with dread,
And thus unto the monarch said:
'Thou, born of old Ikshváku's seed,
Art Justice' self in mortal weed.
Constant and pious, blest by fate,
The right thou must not violate.
Thou, Raghu's son, so famous through
The triple world as just and true,
Perform thy bounden duty still,
Nor stain thy race by deed of ill.

If thou have sworn and now refuse
Thou must thy store of merit lose.
Then, Monarch, let thy Ráma go,
Nor fear for him the demon foe.
The fiends shall have no power to hurt
Him trained to war or inexpert,
Nor vanquish him in battle field,
For Kuśik's son the youth will shield.
He is incarnate Justice, he
The best of men for bravery,
Embodied love of penance drear,
Among the wise without a peer.
Full well he knows, great Kuśik's son,
The arms celestial, every one,
Arms from the Gods themselves concealed,
Far less to other men revealed.
These arms to him, when earth he swayed,
Mighty Kriśáśva, pleased, conveyed.
Kriśáśva's sons they are indeed,
Brought forth by Daksha's lovely seed,[1]
Heralds of conquest, strong and bold,
Brilliant, of semblance manifold.
Jayá and Vijayá, most fair,
A hundred splendid weapons bare.
Of Jayá, glorious as the morn,
First fifty noble sons were born,
Boundless in size yet viewless too,
They came the demons to subdue.
And fifty children also came
Of Vijayá the beauteous dame,
Sanháras named, of mighty force,

[1] These mysterious animated weapons are enumerated in Cantos XXIX and XXX. Daksha was the son of Brahmá and one of the Parjápatis, Demiurgi, or secondary authors of creation.

Hard to assail or check in course.
Of these the hermit knows the use,
And weapons new can he produce.
All these the mighty saint wild yield
To Ráma's hand, to own and wield;
And armed with these, beyond a doubt
Shall Ráma put those fiends to rout.
For Ráma and the people's sake,
For thine own good my counsel take,
Nor seek, O King, with fond delay,
The parting of thy son to stay.'

CANTO XXIV.

THE SPELLS.

Vaśishṭha thus was speaking still:
The monarch, of his own free will,
Bade with quick zeal and joyful cheer
Ráma and Lakshmaṇ hasten near.
Mother and sire in loving care
Sped their dear son with rite and prayer:
Vaśishṭha blessed him ere he went;
O'er his loved head the father bent,
And then to Kuśik's son resigned
Ráma with Lakshmaṇ close behind.
Standing by Viśvámitra's side,
The youthful hero, lotus-eyed,
The Wind-God saw, and sent a breeze
Whose sweet pure touch just waved the trees.
There fell from heaven a flowery rain,
And with the song and dance the strain
Of shell and tambour sweetly blent
As forth the son of Raghu went.
The hermit led: behind him came
The bow-armed Ráma, dear to fame,
Whose locks were like the raven's wing:[1]
Then Lakshmaṇ, closely following.
The Gods and Indra, filled with joy,
Looked down upon the royal boy,
And much they longed the death to see

[1] Youths of the Kshatriya class used to leave unshorn the side locks of their hair. These were called *Káka-paksha*, or raven's wings.

Of their ten-headed enemy.[1]
Ráma and Lakshmaṇ paced behind
That hermit of the lofty mind,
As the young Aśvins,[2] heavenly pair,
Follow Lord Indra through the air.
On arm and hand the guard they wore,
Quiver and bow and sword they bore;
Two fire-born Gods of War seemed they,[3]
He, Śiva's self who let the way.
Upon fair Sarjú's southern shore
They now had walked a league and more,
When thus the sage in accents mild
To Ráma said: 'Beloved child,
This lustral water duly touch:
My counsel will avail thee much.
Forget not all the words I say,
Nor let the occasion slip away.
Lo, with two spells I thee invest,
The mighty and the mightiest.
O'er thee fatigue shall ne'er prevail,
Nor age or change thy limbs assail.
Thee powers of darkness ne'er shall smite
In tranquil sleep or wild delight.

---

[1] The Rákshas or giant Rávaṇ, king of Lanká.

[2] 'The meaning of Aśvins (from *aśva* a horse, Persian *asp*, Greek ἵππος, Latin *equus*, Welsh *ech*) is Horsemen. They were twin deities of whom frequent mention is made in the Vedas and the Indian myths. The Aśvins have much in common with the Dioscuri of Greece, and their mythical genealogy seems to indicate that their origin was astronomical. They were, perhaps, at first the morning star and evening star. They are said to be the children of the sun and the nymph Aśviní, who is one of the lunar asterisms personified. In the popular mythology they are regarded as the physicians of the Gods.' GORRESIO.

[3] The word *Kumára* (a young prince, a Childe) is also a proper name of Skanda or Kártikeya God of War, the son of Śiva and Umá. The babe was matured in the fire. See Appendix, *Kártikeii Generatio*.

No one is there in all the land
Thine equal for the vigorous hand.
Thou, when thy lips pronounce the spell,
Shalt have no peer in heaven or hell.
None in the world with thee shall vie,
O sinless one, in apt reply,
In fortune, knowledge, wit, and tact,
Wisdom to plan and skill to act.
This double science take, and gain
Glory that shall for aye remain.
Wisdom and judgment spring from each
Of these fair spells whose use I teach.
Hunger and thirst unknown to thee,
High in the worlds thy rank shall be.
For these two spells with might endued,
Are the Great Father's heavenly brood,
And thee, O Chief, may fitly grace,
Thou glory of Kakutstha's race.
Virtues which none can match are thine,
Lord, from thy birth, of gifts divine,
And now these spells of might shall cast
Fresh radiance o'er the gifts thou hast.'

Then Ráma duly touched the wave,
Raised suppliant hands, bowed low his head,
And took the spells the hermit gave,
Whose soul on contemplation fed.
From him whose might these gifts enhanced,
A brighter beam of glory glanced:
So shines in all his autumn blaze
The Day-God of the thousand rays.
The hermit's wants those youths supplied,
As pupils use to holy guide.
And then the night in sweet content
On Sarjú's pleasant bank they spent.

CANTO XXV.

THE HERMITAGE OF LOVE.

Soon as appeared the morning light
Up rose the mighty anchorite,
And thus to youthful Ráma said,
Who lay upon his leafy bed :
'High fate is hers who calls thee son :
    Arise, 'tis break of day ;
Rise, Chief, and let those rites be done
    Due at the morning's ray.'[1]
At that great sage's high behest
    Up sprang the princely pair,
To bathing rites themselves addressed,
    And breathed the holiest prayer.
Their morning task completed, they
    To Viśvámitra came,
That store of holy works, to pay
    The worship saints may claim.
Then to the hallowed spot they went
    Along fair Sarjú's side
Where mix her waters confluent
    With three-pathed Gangá's tide.[2]
There was a sacred hermitage

[1] 'At the rising of the sun as well as at noon certain observances, invocations, and prayers were prescribed which might under no circumstances be omitted. One of these observances was the recitation of the Sávitrí, a Vedic hymn to the Sun of wonderful beauty.' GORRESIO

[2] *Tripathagá, Three-path-go*, flowing in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. See Canto. XLV.

Where saints devout of mind
Their lives through many a lengthened age
To penance had resigned.
That pure abode the princes eyed
With unrestrained delight,
And thus unto the saint they cried,
Rejoicing at the sight:
'Whose is that hermitage we see?
Who makes his dwelling there?
Full of desire to hear are we:
O Saint, the truth declare.'

The hermit smiling made reply
To the two boys' request:
'Hear, Ráma, who in days gone by
This calm retreat possessed.
Kandarpa in apparent form,
Called Káma[1] by the wise,
Dared Umá's[2] new-wed lord to storm
And make the God his prize.
'Gainst Sthánu's[3] self, on rites austere
And vows intent,[4] they say,

---

[1] Tennyson's Indian Cama,' the God of Love, known also by many other names.

[2] *Umá*, or *Párvatí*, was daughter of Himálaya, Monarch of mountains, and wife of Śiva. See Kálidása's *Kumára Sambhava*, or *Birth of the War-God*.

[3] *Sthánu*. The Unmoving one, a name of Śiva.

[4] The practice of austerities, voluntary tortures, and mortifications was anciently universal in India, and was held by the Indians to be of immense efficacy. Hence they mortified themselves to expiate sins, to acquire merits, and to obtain superhuman gifts and powers; the Gods themselves sometimes exercised themselves in such austerities, either to raise themselves to greater power and grandeur, or to counteract the austerities of man which threatened to prevail over them and to deprive them of heaven............Such austerities were called in India

His bold rash hand he dared to rear,
 Though Stháṇu cried, Away!
But the God's eye with scornful glare
 Fell terrible on him,
Dissolved the shape that was so fair
 And burnt up every limb.
Since the great God's terrific rage
 Destroyed his form and frame,
Káma in each succeeding age
 Has borne Ananga's[1] name.
So, where his lovely form decayed,
 This land is Anga styled:
Sacred to him of old this shade,
 And hermits undefiled.
Here Scripture-talking elders sway
 Each sense with firm control,
And penance-rites have washed away
 All sin from every soul.
One night, fair boy, we here will spend,
 A pure stream on each hand,
And with to-morrow's light will bend
 Our steps to yonder strand.
Here let us bathe, and free from stain
 To that pure grove repair,
Sacred to Káma, and remain
 One night in comfort there.'

With penance' far-discerning eye
 The saintly men beheld
Their coming, and with transport high
 Each holy bosom swelled.
To Kuśik's son the gift they gave

---

tapas (burning ardour, fervent devotion) and he who practised them *tapasvin*.' GORRESIO.

[1] *The Bodiless one.*

That honoured guest should greet,
Water they brought his feet to lave,
And showed him honour meet.
Ráma and Lakshmaṇ next obtained
In due degree their share.
Then with sweet talk the guests remained,
And charmed each listener there.
The evening prayers were duly said
With voices calm and low:
Then on the ground each laid his head
And slept till morning's glow.

CANTO XXVI.

THE FOREST OF TÁḌAKÁ.

When the fair light of morning rose
The princely tamers of their foes
Followed, his morning worship o'er,
The hermit to the river's shore.
The high-souled men with thoughtful care
A pretty barge had stationed there.
All cried, 'O lord, this barge ascend,
And with thy princely followers bend
To yonder side thy prosperous way
With naught to check thee or delay.'

Nor did the saint their rede reject:
He bade farewell with due respect,
And crossed, attended by the twain,
That river rushing to the main.
When now the bark was half way o'er,
Ráma and Lakshmaṇ heard the roar,
That louder grew and louder yet,
Of waves by dashing waters met.
Then Ráma asked the mighty seer:
'What is the tumult that I hear
Of waters cleft in mid career?'
Soon as the speech of Ráma, stirred
By deep desire to know, he heard,
The pious saint began to tell
What caused the waters' roar and swell:
'On high Kailása's distant hill
There lies a noble lake

Whose waters, born from Brahmá's will,
The name of Mánas[1] take.
Thence, hallowing where'er they flow,
The streams of Sarjú fall,
And wandering through the plains below
Embrace Ayodhyá's wall.
Still, still preserved in Sarjú's name
Sarovar's[2] fame we trace,
The flood of Brahmá whence she came
To run her holy race.
To meet great Gangá here she hies
With tributary wave:
Hence the loud roar ye hear arise,
Of floods that swell and rave.
Here, pride of Raghu's line, do thou
In humble adoration bow.'

He spoke. The princes both obeyed,
And reverence to each river paid.[3]
They reached the southern shore at last,
And gaily on their journey passed.
A little space beyond there stood
A gloomy awe-inspiring wood.

---

[1] 'A celebrated lake regarded in India as sacred. It lies in the lofty region between the northern highlands of the Himálayas and mount Kailása, the region of the sacred lakes. The poem, following the popular Indian belief, makes the river Sarayú (now Sarjú) flow from the Mánasa lake; the sources of the river are a little to the south about a day's journey from the lake. See Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde*, pag. 34.' GORRESIO. *Manas* means *mind; mánasa* mental, mind-born.

[2] *Sarovar* means best of lakes. This is another of the poet's fanciful etymologies.

[3] The confluence of two or more rivers is often a venerated and holy place. The most famous is Prayág or Allahabad, where the Sarasvatí by an underground course is believed to join the Jumna and the Ganges.

The monarch's noble son began
To question thus the holy man:
'Whose gloomy forest meets mine eye
Like some vast cloud that fills the sky?
Pathless and dark it seems to be,
Where birds in thousands wander free;
Where shrill cicalas' cries resound,
And fowl of dismal note abound.
Lion, rhinoceros, and bear,
Boar, tiger, elephant, are there,
There shrubs and thorns run wild:
Dháo, Sál, Bignonia, Bel,[1] are found,
And every tree that grows on ground:
How is the forest styled?'
The glorious saint this answer made:
'Dear child of Raghu, hear
Who dwells within the horrid shade
That looks so dark and drear.
Where now is wood, long ere this day
Two broad and fertile lands,
Malaja and Karúsha lay,
Adorned by heavenly hands.
Here, mourning friendship's broken ties,
Lord Indra of the thousand eyes
Hungered and sorrowed many a day,
His brightness soiled with mud and clay,
When in a storm of passion he
Had slain his dear friend Namuchi.
Then came the Gods and saints who bore
Their golden pitchers brimming o'er
With holy streams that banish stain,

---

[1] The botanical names of the trees mentioned in the text are Grislea Tormentosa, Shorea Robusta, Echites Antidysenterica, Bignonia Suaveolens, Œgle Marmelos, and Diospyrus Glutinosa. I have omitted the *Kutaja* (Echites) and the *Tinduka* (Diospyrus).

And bathed Lord Indra pure again.
When in this land the God was freed
From spot and stain of impious deed
For that his own dear friend he slew,
High transport thrilled his bosom through.
Then in his joy the lands he blessed,
And gave a boon they long possessed:
'Because these fertile lands retain
The washings of the blot and stain,'
   'Twas thus Lord Indra sware,
'Malaja and Karúsha's name
Shall celebrate with deathless fame
   My malady and care.'[1]
'So be it', all the Immortals cried,
   When Indra's speech they heard,
And with acclaim they ratified
   The names his lips conferred.
Long time, O victor of thy foes,
These happy lands had sweet repose,
And higher still in fortune rose.
At length a spirit, loving ill,
Táḍaká, wearing shapes at will,
Whose mighty strength, exceeding vast,
A thousand elephants' surpassed,
Was to fierce Sunda, lord and head
Of all the demon armies, wed.
From her, Lord Indra's peer in might
Giant Máríeha sprang to light;
And she, a constant plague and pest,
These two fair realms has long distressed.
Now dwelling in her dark abode

---

[1] Here we meet with a fresh myth to account for the name of these regions. *Malaja* is probably a non-Aryan word signifying a hilly country: taken as a Sanskrit compound it means *sprung from defilement.* The word *Karúsha* appears to have a somewhat similar meaning.

A league away she bars the road:
And we, O Ráma, hence must go
Where lies the forest of the foe.
Now on thine own right arm rely,
    And my command obey:
Smite the foul monster that she die,
    And take the plague away.
To reach this country none may dare,
    Fallen from its old estate,
Which she, whose fury naught can bear,
    Has left so desolate.
And now my truthful tale is told
    How with accursed sway
The spirit plagued this wood of old,
    And ceases not to-day.'

CANTO XXVII.

THE BIRTH OF TÁḌAKÁ.

When thus the sage without a peer
Had closed that story strange to hear,
Ráma again the saint addressed
To set one lingering doubt at rest:
'O holy man, 'tis said by all
That spirits' strength is weak and small;
How can she match, of power so slight,
A thousand elephants in might?'
And Viśvámitra thus replied
To Raghu's son the glorified:
'Listen, and I will tell thee how
She gained the strength that arms her now.
A mighty spirit lived of yore;
Suketu was the name he bore.
Childless was he, and free from crime
In rites austere he passed his time.
The mighty Sire was pleased to show
His favour, and a child bestow,
Táḍaká named, most fair to see,
A pearl among the maids was she,
And matched, for such was Brahmá's dower,
A thousand elephants in power.
Nor would the Eternal Sire, although
The spirit longed, a son bestow.
That maid in beauty's youthful pride
Was given to Sunda for a bride.
Her son, Márícha was his name,
A giant, through a curse, became.

She, widowed, dared with him molest
Agastya,[1] of all saints the best.
Inflamed with hunger's wildest rage,
Roaring she rushed upon the sage.
When the great hermit saw her near,
On speeding in her fierce career,
He thus pronounced Máricha's doom:
'A giant's form and shape assume.'
And then, by mighty anger swayed,
On Tádaká this curse he laid:
'Thy present form and semblance quit,
And wear a shape thy mood to fit;
Changed form and feature by my ban,
A fearful thing that feeds on man.'
She, by his awful curse possessed,
And mad with rage that fills her breast,
Has on this land her fury dealt
Where once the saint Agastya dwelt.
Go, Ráma, smite this monster dead,
The wicked plague, of power so dread,
And further by this deed of thine
The good of Bráhmans and of kine.
Thy hand alone can overthrow,
In all the worlds, this impious foe.
Nor let compassion lead thy mind
To shrink from blood of womankind;
A monarch's son must ever count
The people's welfare paramount,

---

[1] 'This is one of those indefinable mythic personages who are found in the ancient traditions of many nations, and in whom cosmogonical or astronomical notions are generally figured. Thus it is related of Agastya that the Vindhyan mountains prostrated themselves before him; and yet the same Agastya is believed to be regent of the star Canopus.' GORRESIO.

He will appear as the friend and helper of Ráma farther on in the poem.

And whether pain or joy he deal
Dare all things for his subjects' weal;
Yea, if the deed bring praise or guilt,
If life be saved or blood be spilt:
Such, through all time, should be the care
Of those a kingdom's weight who bear.
Slay, Ráma, slay this impious fiend,
For by no law her life is screened.
So Mantharé, as bards have told,
Virochan's child, was slain of old
By Indra, when in furious hate
She longed the earth to devastate.
So Kávya's mother, Bhrigu's wife,
Who loved her husband as her life,
When Indra's throne she sought to gain,
By Vishṇu's hand of yore was slain.
By these and high-souled kings beside,
Struck down, have lawless women died.'

CANTO XXVIII.

THE DEATH OF TÁḌAKÁ.

Thus spoke the saint. Each vigorous word
The noble monarch's offspring heard,
And, reverent hands together laid,
His answer to the hermit made:
'My sire and mother bade me aye
Thy word, O mighty Saint, obey.
So will I, O most glorious, kill
This Táḍaká who joys in ill,
For such my sire's, and such thy will.
To aid with mine avenging hand
The Bráhmans, kine, and all the land,
Obedient, heart and soul, I stand.'

Thus spoke the tamer of the foe,
And by the middle grasped his bow.
Strongly he drew the sounding string
That made the distant welkin ring.
Scared by the mighty clang the deer
That roamed the forest shook with fear.
And Táḍaká the echo heard,
And rose in haste from slumber stirred.
In wild amaze, her soul aflame
With fury toward the spot she came.
When that foul shape of evil mien
And stature vast as e'er was seen
The wrathful son of Raghu eyed,
He thus unto his brother cried:
'Her dreadful shape, O Lakshmaṇ, see,

A form to shudder at and flee.
The hideous monster's very view
Would cleave a timid heart in two.
Behold the demon hard to smite,
Defended by her magic might.
My hand shall stay her course to-day,
And shear her nose and ears away.
No heart have I her life to take:
I spare it for her sex's sake.
My will is but, with minished force,
To check her in her evil course.'
While thus he spoke, by rage impelled
  Roaring as she came nigh,
The fiend her course at Ráma held
  With huge arms tossed on high.
Her, rushing on, the seer assailed
  With a loud cry of hate;
And thus the sons of Raghu hailed:
  'Fight, and be fortunate.'
Then from the earth a horrid cloud
  Of dust the demon raised,
And for awhile in darkling shroud
  Wrapt Raghu's sons amazed.
Then calling on her magic power
  The fearful fight to wage,
She smote him with a stony shower,
  Till Ráma burned with rage.
Then pouring forth his arrowy rain
  That stony flood to stay,
With winged darts, as she charged amain
  He shore her hands away.
As Táḍaká still thundered near
  Thus maimed by Ráma's blows,
Lakshmaṇ in fury severed sheer

The monster's ears and nose.
Assuming by her magic skill
A fresh and fresh disguise,
She tried a thousand shapes at will,
Then vanished from their eyes.
When Gádhi's son of high renown
Still saw the stony rain pour down
Upon each princely warrior's head,
With words of wisdom thus he said:
'Enough of mercy, Ráma, lest
This sinful evil-working pest,
Disturber of each holy rite,
Repair by magic arts her might.
Without delay the fiend should die,
For, see, the twilight hour is nigh.
And at the joints of night and day
Such giant foes are hard to slay.'
Then Ráma, skilful to direct
His arrow to the sound,
With shafts the mighty demon checked
Who rained her stones around.
She sore impeded and beset
By Ráma and his arrowy net,
Though skilled in guile and magic lore,
Rushed on the brothers with a roar.
Deformed, terrific, murderous, dread,
Swift as the levin on she sped,
Like cloudy pile in autumn's sky,
Lifting her two vast arms on high,
When Ráma smote her with a dart
Shaped like a crescent to the heart.
Sore wounded by the shaft that came
With lightning speed and surest aim,
Blood spouting from her month and side,

She fell upon the earth and died.
Soon as the Lord who rules the sky
Saw the dread monster lifeless lie,
He called aloud, Well done! well done!
And the Gods honoured Raghu's son.
Standing in heaven the Thousand-eyed,
With all the Immortals, joying cried:
'Lift up thine eyes, O Saint, and see
The Gods and Indra nigh to thee.
This deed of Ráma's boundless might
Has filled our bosoms with delight.
Now, for our will would have it so,
To Raghu's son some favour show.
Invest him with the power which naught
But penance gains and holy thought.
Those heavenly arms on him bestow
To thee entrusted long ago
By great Kriśáśva best of kings,
Son of the Lord of living things.
More fit recipient none can be
Than he who joys in following thee;
And for our sakes the monarch's seed
Has yet to do a mighty deed.'

He spoke; and all the heavenly train
Rejoicing sought their homes again,
While honour to the saint they paid.
Then came the evening's twilight shade.
The best of hermits overjoyed
To know the monstrous fiend destroyed,
His lips on Ráma's forehead pressed,
And thus the conquering chief addressed:
'O Ráma gracious to the sight,
Here will we pass the present night,
And with the morrow's earliest ray

Bend to my hermitage our way.'
The son of Daśaratha heard,
Delighted, Viśvámitra's word,
And as he bade, that night he spent
In Táḍaká's wild wood, content.
And the grove shone that happy day,
Freed from the curse that on it lay,
Like Chaitraratha[1] fair and gay.

---

[1] The famous pleasure-garden of Kuvera the God of Wealth.

CANTO XXIX.

THE CELESTIAL ARMS.

That night they slept and took their rest;
And then the mighty saint addressed,
With pleasant smile and accents mild
These words to Raghu's princely child:
'Well pleased am I. High fate be thine,
Thou scion of a royal line.
Now will I, for I love thee so,
All heavenly arms on thee bestow.
Victor with these, whoe'er oppose,
Thy hand shall conquer all thy foes,
Though Gods and spirits of the air,
Serpents and fiends, the conflict dare.
I'll give thee as a pledge of love
The mystic arms they use above,
For worthy thou to have revealed
The weapons I have learnt to wield.[1]
First, son of Raghu, shall be thine
The arm of Vengeance, strong, divine:
The arm of Fate, the arm of Right,
And Vishṇu's arm of awful might:
That, before which no foe can stand,

[1] 'The whole of this Canto, together with the following one, regards the belief, formerly prevalent in India, that by virtue of certain spells, to be learnt and muttered, secret knowledge and superhuman powers might be acquired. To this the poet has already alluded in Canto xxiii. These incorporeal weapons are partly represented according to the fashion of those ascribed to the Gods and the different orders of demigods, partly are the mere creations of fancy; and it would not be easy to say what idea the poet had of them in his own mind, or what powers he meant to assign to each.' SCHLEGEL.

The thunderbolt of Indra's hand;
And Śiva's trident, sharp and dread,
And that dire weapon Brahmá's Head.
And two fair clubs, O royal child,
One Charmer and one Pointed styled
With flame of lambent fire aglow,
On thee, O Chieftain, I bestow.
And Fate's dread net and Justice' noose
That none may conquer, for thy use:
And the great cord, renowned of old,
Which Varuṇ ever loves to hold.
Take these two thunderbolts, which I
Have got for thee, the Moist and Dry.
Here Śiva's dart to thee I yield,
And that which Vishṇu wont to wield.
I give to thee the arm of Fire,
Desired by all and named the Spire.
To thee I grant the Wind-God's dart,
Named Crusher, O thou pure of heart.
This arm, the Horse's Head, accept,
And this, the Curlew's Bill yclept,
And these two spears, the best e'er flew,
Named the Invincible and True.
And arms of fiends I make thine own,
Skull-wreath and mace that smashes bone.
And Joyous, which the spirits bear,
Great weapon of the sons of air.
Brave offspring of the best of lords,
I give thee now the Gem of swords,
And offer next, thine hand to arm,
The heavenly bards' beloved charm.
Now with two arms I thee invest
Of never-ending Sleep and Rest,
With weapons of the Sun and Rain,

And those that dry and burn amain;
And strong Desire with conquering touch,
The dart that Káma prizes much.
I give the arm of shadowy powers
That bleeding flesh of men devours.
I give the arms the God of Gold.
And giant fiends exult to hold.
This smites the foe in battle-strife,
And takes his fortune, strength, and life.
I give the arms called False and True,
And great Illusion give I too;
The hero's arm called Strong and Bright
That spoils the foeman's strength in fight.
I give thee as a priceless boon
The Dew, the weapon of the Moon,
And add the weapon, deftly planned,
That strengthens Viśvakarmá's hand.
The Mortal dart whose point is chill,
And Slaughter, ever sure to kill;
All these and other arms, for thou
Art very dear, I give thee now.
Receive these weapons from my hand,
Son of the noblest in the land.'

Facing the east, the glorious saint
Pure from all spot of earthly taint,
To Ráma, with delighted mind,
That noble host of spells consigned.
He taught the arms, whose lore is won
Hardly by Gods, to Raghu's son.
He muttered low the spell whose call
Summons those arms and rules them all,
And, each in visible form and frame,
Before the monarch's son they came.
They stood and spoke in reverent guise

To Ráma with exulting cries :
'O noblest child of Raghu, see,
Thy ministers and thralls are we.'
With joyful heart and eager hand
Ráma received the wondrous band,
And thus with words of welcome cried :
'Aye present to my will abide.'
Then hasted to the saint to pay
Due reverence, and pursued his way

CANTO XXX.

THE MYSTERIOUS POWERS.[1]

Pure, with glad cheer and joyful breast,
Of those mysterious arms possessed,
Ráma, now passing on his way,
Thus to the saint began to say :
'Lord of these mighty weapons, I
Can scarce be harmed by Gods on high ;
Now, best of saints, I long to gain
The powers that can these arms restrain.'
Thus spoke the prince. The sage austere,
True to his vows, from evil clear,
Called forth the names of those great charms
Whose powers restrain the deadly arms.
'Receive thou True and Truly-famed,
And Bold and Fleet : the weapons named
Warder and Progress, swift of pace,
Averted-head and Drooping-face ;
The Seen, and that which Secret flies ;
The weapon of the thousand eyes ;
Ten-headed, and the Hundred-faced,
Star-gazer and the Layer-waste :

[1] 'In Sanskrit *Sanhára,* a word which has various signfications but the primary meaning of which is *the act of seizing.* A magical power seems to be implied of employing the weapons when and where required. The remarks I have made on the preceding Canto apply with still greater force to this. The MSS. greatly vary in the enumeration of these *Sanháras,* and it is not surprising that copyists have incorrectly written the names which they did not well understand. The commentators throw no light upon the subject.' SCHLEGEL. I have taken the liberty of omitting four of these which Schlegel translates 'Scleromphalum, Euomphalum, Centiventrem, and Chrysomphalum.'

The Omen-bird, the Pure-from-spot,
The pair that wake and slumber not:
The Fiendish, that which shakes amain,
The Strong-of-Hand, the Rich-in-Gain:
The Guardian, and the Close-allied,
The Gaper, Love, and Golden-side:
O Raghu's son receive all these,
Bright ones that wear what forms they please;
Kriśáśva's mystic sons are they,
And worthy thou their might to sway.'
With joy the pride of Raghu's race
Received the hermit's proffered grace,
Mysterious arms, to check and stay,
Or smite the foeman in the fray.
Then, all with heavenly forms endued,
Nigh came the wondrous multitude.
Celestial in their bright attire
Some shone like coals of burning fire;
Some were like clouds of dusky smoke;
And suppliant thus they sweetly spoke:
'Thy thralls, O Ráma, here we stand:
Command, we pray, thy faithful band.'
'Depart,' he cried, 'where each may list,
But when I call you to assist,
Be present to my mind with speed,
And aid me in the hour of need.'

To Ráma then they lowly bent,
And round him in due reverence went,
To his command they answered, Yea,
And as they came so went away.
When thus the arms had homeward flown,
With pleasant words and modest tone,
E'en as he walked, the prince began
To question thus the holy man:

'What cloudlike wood is that which near
The mountain's side I see appear?
O tell me, for I long to know;
Its pleasant aspect charms me so.
Its glades are full of deer at play,
And sweet birds sing on every spray.
Past is the hideous wild; I feel
So sweet a tremor o'er me steal,
And hail with transport fresh and new
A land that is so fair to view.
Then tell me all, thou holy Sage,
And whose this pleasant hermitage
In which those wicked ones delight
To mar and kill each holy rite,
And with foul heart and evil deed
Thy sacrifice, great Saint, impede.
To whom, O Sage, belongs this land
In which thine altars ready stand?
'Tis mine to guard them, and to slay
The giants who the rites would stay.
All this, O best of saints, I burn
From thine own lips, my lord, to learn.'

CANTO XXXI.

THE PERFECT HERMITAGE.

Thus spoke the prince of boundless might,
And thus replied the anchorite:
'Chief of the mighty arm, of yore
Lord Vishṇu whom the Gods adore,
For holy thought and rites austere
Of penance made his dwelling here.
This ancient wood was called of old
Grove of the Dwarf, the mighty-souled,
And when perfection he attained
The grove the name of Perfect gained.
Bali of yore, Virochan's son,
Dominion over Indra won,
And when with power his proud heart swelled,
O'er the three worlds his empire held.
When Bali then began a rite,
The Gods and Indra in affright
Sought Vishṇu in this place of rest,
And thus with prayers the God addressed:
'Bali, Virochan's mighty son,
His sacrifice has now begun:
Of boundless wealth, that demon king
Is bounteous to each living thing.
Though suppliants flock from every side
The suit of none is e'er denied.
Whate'er, where'er, howe'er the call,
He hears the suit and gives to all.
Now with thine own illusive art
Perform, O Lord, the helper's part:

Assume a dwarfish form, and thus
From fear and danger rescue us.'[1]

Thus in their dread the Immortals sued:
The God a dwarflike shape indued:[2]
Before Virochan's son he came,
Three steps of land his only claim.
The boon obtained, in wondrous wise
Lord Vishṇu's form increased in size;
Through all the worlds, tremendous, vast,
God of the Triple Step, he passed.[3]
The whole broad earth from side to side
He measured with one mighty stride,
Spanned with the next the firmament,
And with the third through heaven he went.
Thus was the king of demons hurled
By Vishṇu to the nether world,
And thus the universe restored
To Indra's rule, its ancient lord.
And now because the immortal God
This spot in dwarflike semblance trod,
The grove has aye been loved by me
For reverence of the devotee.
But demons haunt it, prompt to stay
Each holy offering I would pay.
Be thine, O lion-lord, to kill
These giants that delight in ill.
This day, beloved child, our feet
Shall rest within the calm retreat;

---

[1] I omit, after this line, eight *ślokes* which, as Schlegel allows, are quite out of place.

[2] This is the fifth of the *avatárs*, descents or incarnations of Vishṇu.

[3] This is a solar allegory. Vishṇu is the sun, the three steps being his rising, culmination, and setting.

And know, thou chief of Raghu's line,
My hermitage is also thine.'
He spoke; and soon the anchorite,
With joyous looks that beamed delight,
With Ráma and his brother stood
Within the consecrated wood.
Soon as they saw the holy man,
With one accord together ran
The dwellers in the sacred shade,
And to the saint their reverence paid,
And offered water for his feet;
The gift of honour and a seat;
And next with hospitable care
They entertained the princely pair.
The royal tamers of their foes
Rested awhile in sweet repose:
Then to the chief of hermits sued
Standing in suppliant attitude:
'Begin, O best of saints, we pray,
Initiatory rites to-day.
This Perfect Grove shall be anew
Made perfect, and thy words be true.'

Then, thus addressed, the holy man,
The very glorious sage, began
The high preliminary rite,
Restraining sense and appetite.
Calmly the youths that night reposed,
And rose when morn her light disclosed,
Their morning worship paid, and took
Of lustral water from the brook.
Thus purified they breathed the prayer,
Then greeted Viśvámitra where
As celebrant he sate beside
The flame with sacred oil supplied.

CANTO XXXII.

VIŚVÁMITRA'S SACRIFICE.

That conquering pair, of royal race,
Skilled to observe due time and place,
To Kúśik's hermit son addressed,
In timely words, their meet request:
'When must we, lord, we pray thee tell,
Those Rovers of the Night repel?
Speak, lest we let the moment fly,
And pass the due occasion by.'
Thus longing for the strife, they prayed,
And thus the hermits answer made:
'Till the fifth day be come and past,
O Raghu's sons, your watch must last.
The saint his Díkshá[1] has begun,
And all that time will speak to none.'
Soon as the steadfast devotees
Had made reply in words like these,
The youths began, disdaining sleep,
Six days and nights their watch to keep.
The warrior pair who tamed the foe,
Unrivalled benders of the bow,
Kept watch and ward unwearied still
To guard the saint from scathe and ill.
'Twas now the sixth returning day,
The hour foretold had past away.
Then Ráma cried: 'O Lakshman, now
Firm, watchful, resolute be thou.
The fiends as yet have kept afar

[1] Certain ceremonies preliminary to a sacrifice.

From the pure grove in which we are;
Yet waits us, ere the day shall close,
Dire battle with the demon foes.'

While thus spoke Ráma borne away
By longing for the deadly fray,
See! bursting from the altar came
The sudden glory of the flame.
Round priest and deacon, and upon
Grass, ladles, flowers, the splendour shone,
And the high rite, in order due,
With sacred texts began anew.
But then a loud and fearful roar
Re-echoed through the sky;
And like vast clouds that shadow o'er
The heavens in dark July,
Involved in gloom of magic might
Two fiends rushed on amain,
Máricha, Rover of the Night,
Suváhu, and their train.
As on they came in wild career
Thick blood in rain they shed;
And Ráma saw those things of fear
Impending overhead.
Then soon as those accursed two
Who showered down blood he spied,
Thus to his brother brave and true
Spoke Ráma lotus-eyed:
'Now, Lakshman, thou these fiends shalt see,
Man-eaters, foul of mind,
Before my mortal weapon flee
Like clouds before the wind.'
He spoke. An arrow, swift as thought,
Upon his bow he pressed,
And smote, to utmost fury wrought,

Márícha on the breast.
Deep in his flesh the weapon lay
Winged by the mystic spell,
And, hurled a hundred leagues away,
In ocean's flood he fell.
Then Ráma, when he saw the foe
Convulsed and mad with pain
Neath the chill-pointed weapon's blow,
To Lakshmaṇ spoke again :
'See, Lakshmaṇ, see ! this mortal dart
That strikes a numbing chill,
Hath struck him senseless with the smart,
But left him breathing still.
But these who love the evil way,
And drink the blood they spill,
Rejoicing holy rites to stay,
Fierce plagues, my hand shall kill.'
He seized another shaft, the best,
Aglow with living flame ;
It struck Suváhu on the chest,
And dead to earth he came.
Again a dart, the Wind-God's own,
Upon his string he laid,
And all the demons were o'erthrown,
The saints no more afraid.
When thus the fiends were slain in fight,
Disturbers of each holy rite,
Due honour by the saints was paid
To Ráma for his wondrous aid :
So Indra is adored when he
Has won some glorious victory.
Success at last the rite had crowned,
And Viśvámitra gazed around,
And seeing every side at rest,

The son of Raghu thus addressed:
'My joy, O Prince, is now complete:
Thou hast obeyed my will:
Perfect before, this calm retreat
Is now more perfect still.'

CANTO XXXIII.

THE SONE.

Their task achieved, the princes spent
That night with joy and full content.
Ere yet the dawn was well displayed
Their morning rites they duly paid,
And sought, while yet the light was faint,
The hermits and the mighty saint.
They greeted first that holy sire
Resplendent like the burning fire,
And then with noble words began
Their sweet speech to the sainted man:
'Here stand, O lord, thy servants true:
Command what thou wouldst have us do.'
The saints, by Viśvámitra led,
To Ráma thus in answer said:
'Janak the king who rules the land
Of fertile Mithilá has planned
A noble sacrifice, and we
Will thither go the rite to see.
Thou, Prince of men, with us shalt go,
And there behold the wondrous bow,
Terrific, vast, of matchless might,
Which, splendid at the famous rite,
The Gods assembled gave the king.
No giant, fiend, or God can string
That gem of bows, no heavenly bard;
Then, sure, for man the task were hard.
When lords of earth have longed to know
The virtue of that wondrous bow,

The strongest sons of kings in vain
Have tried the mighty cord to strain.
This famous bow thou there shalt view,
And wondrous rites shalt witness too.
The high-souled king who lords it o'er
The realm of Mithilá of yore
Gained from the Gods this bow, the price
Of his imperial sacrifice.
Won by the rite the glorious prize
Still in the royal palace lies,
Laid up in oil of precious scent
With aloe-wood and incense blent.'
  Then Ráma answering, Be it so,
Made ready with the rest to go.
The saint himself was now prepared,
But ere beyond the grove he fared,
He turned him and in words like these
Addressed the sylvan deities:
'Farewell! each holy rite complete,
I leave the hermits' perfect seat:
To Gangá's northern shore I go
Beneath Himálaya's peaks of snow.'
With reverent steps he paced around
The limits of the holy ground,
And then the mighty saint set forth
And took his journey to the north.
His pupils, deep in Scripture's page,
Followed behind the holy sage,
And servants from the sacred grove
A hundred wains for convoy drove.
The very birds that winged that air,
The very deer that harboured there,
Forsook the glade and leafy brake
And followed for the hermit's sake.

They travelled far, till in the west
The sun was speeding to his rest,
And made, their portioned journey o'er,
Their halt on Śoṇa's[1] distant shore.
The hermits bathed when sank the sun,
And every rite was duly done,
Oblations paid to Fire, and then
Sate round their chief the holy men.
Ráma and Lakshmaṇ lowly bowed
In reverence to the hermit crowd,
And Ráma, having sate him down
Before the saint of pure renown,
With humble palms together laid
His eager supplication made:
'What country, O my lord, is this,
Fair-smiling in her wealth and bliss?
Deign fully, O thou mighty Seer,
To tell me, for I long to hear.'
Moved by the prayer of Ráma, he
Told forth the country's history.

---

[1] A river which rises in Bundelcund and falls into the Ganges near Patna. It is called also *Hiraṇyaváhu*, Golden-armed, and *Hiraṇyaváha*, Auriferous.

CANTO XXXIV.

BRAHMADATTA.

'A king of Brahmá's seed who bore
The name of Kuśa reigned of yore.
Just, faithful to his vows, and true,
He held the good in honour due.
His bride, a queen of noble name,
Of old Vidarbha's[1] monarchs came.
Like their own father, children four,
All valiant boys, the lady bore.
In glorious deeds each nerve they strained,
And well their Warrior part sustained.
To them most just, and true, and brave,
Their father thus his counsel gave:
'Beloved children, ne'er forget
Protection is a prince's debt:
The noble work at once begin,
High virtue and her fruits to win.'
The youths, to all the people dear,
Received his speech with willing ear;
And each went forth his several way,
Foundations of a town to lay.
Kuśámba, prince of high renown,
Was builder of Kauśámbí's town,
And Kuśanábha, just and wise,
Bade high Mahodaya's towers arise.
Amúrtarajas chose to dwell
In Dharmáraṇya's citadel,
And Vasu bade his city fair

---

[1] The modern Berar.

The name of Girivraja bear.[1]
This fertile spot whereon we stand
Was once the high-souled Vasu's land.
Behold! as round we turn our eyes,
Five lofty mountain peaks arise.
See! bursting from her parent hill,
Sumágadhí, a lovely rill,
Bright gleaming as she flows between
The mountains, like a wreath is seen,
And then through Magadh's plains and groves
With many a fair mæander roves.
And this was Vasu's old domain,
The fertile Magadh's broad champaign,
Which smiling fields of tilth adorn
And diadem with golden corn.
 The queen Ghritáchí, nymph most fair,
Married to Kuśanábha, bare
A hundred daughters' lovely-faced,
With every charm and beauty graced.
It chanced the maidens, bright and gay
As lightning-flashes on a day
Of rain-time, to the garden went
With song and play and merriment,
And there in gay attire they strayed,
And danced, and laughed, and sang, and played.
The God of Wind who roves at will
All places, as he lists, to fill,

---

[1] According to the Bengal recension, the first (Kuśámba) is called Kuśáśva, and his city Kauśáśví. This name does not occur elsewhere. The reading of the northern recension is confirmed by Foë Kouë Ki; p. 385, where the city *Kiaoshangmi* is mentioned. It lay 500 *lis* to the south-west of *Prayága*, on the south bank of the Jumna. *Mahodaya* is another name of Kanyákubja: *Dharmáranya*, the wood to which the God of Justice is said to have fled through fear of Soma the Moon-God was in Magadh. Girivraja was in the same neighbourhood. See Lassen's I. A. Vol. I. p. 604.

Saw the young maidens dancing there,
Of faultless shape and mien most fair.
'I love you all, sweet girls,' he cried,
'And each shall be my darling bride.
Forsake, forsake your mortal lot,
And gain a life that withers not.
A fickle thing is youth's brief span,
And more than all in mortal man.
Receive unending youth, and be
Immortal, O my loves, with me.'

The hundred girls, to wonder stirred,
The wooing of the Wind-God heard,
Laughed, as a jest, his suit aside,
And with one voice they thus replied:
'O mighty Wind, free spirit who
All life pervadest, through and through,
Thy wondrous power we maidens know;
Then wherefore wilt thou mock us so?
Our sire is Kuśanábha, King;
And we, forsooth, have charms to bring
A God to woo us from the skies;
But honour first we maidens prize.
Far may the hour, we pray, be hence,
When we, O thou of little sense,
Our truthful father's choice refuse,
And for ourselves our husbands choose.
Our honoured sire our lord we deem,
He is to us a God supreme,
And they to whom his high decree
May give us shall our husbands be.'

He heard the answer they returned,
And mighty rage within him burned.
On each fair maid a blast he sent:
Each stately form he bowed and bent.

Bent double by the Wind-God's ire
They sought the palace of their sire,
There fell upon the ground with sighs,
While tears and shame were in their eyes.
The king himself, with troubled brow,
Saw his dear girls so fair but now,
A mournful sight all bent and bowed,
And grieving thus he cried aloud:
'What fate is this, and what the cause?
What wretch has scorned all heavenly laws?
Who thus your forms could curve and break?
You struggle, but no answer make.'

They heard the speech of that wise king
Of their misfortune questioning.
Again the hundred maidens sighed,
Touched with their heads his feet, and cried:
'The God of Wind, pervading space,
Would bring on us a foul disgrace,
And choosing folly's evil way
From virtue's path in scorn would stray.
But we in words like these reproved
The God of Wind whom passion moved:
'Farewell, O Lord! A sire have we,
No women uncontrolled and free.
Go, and our sire's consent obtain
If thou our maiden hands wouldst gain.
No self-dependent life we live:
If we offend, our fault forgive.'
'But led by folly as a slave,
He would not hear the rede we gave,
And even as we gently spoke
We felt the Wind-God's crushing stroke.'

The pious king, with grief distressed,
The noble hundred thus addressed:

'With patience, daughters, bear your fate,
Yours was a deed supremely great
When with one mind you kept from shame
The honour of your father's name.
Patience, when men their anger vent,
Is woman's praise and ornament;
Yet when the Gods inflict the blow
Hard is it to support the woe.
Patience, my girls, exceeds all price:
'Tis alms, and truth, and sacrifice.
Patience is virtue, patience fame:
Patience upholds this earthly frame.
And now, I think, is come the time
To wed you in your maiden prime.
Now, daughters, go where'er you will:
Thoughts for your good my mind shall fill.'
The maidens went, consoled, away:
The best of kings, that very day,
Summoned his ministers of state
About their marriage to debate.
Since then, because the Wind-God bent
The damsels' forms for punishment,
That royal town is known to fame
By Kanyákubja's[1] borrowed name.

There lived a sage called Chúli then,
Devoutest of the sons of men;
His days in penance rites he spent,
A glorious saint, most continent.
To him absorbed in tasks austere
The child of Urmilá drew near,
Sweet Somadá, the heavenly maid,
And lent the saint her pious aid.

[1] That is, the City of the Bent Virgins, the modern Kanauj or Canouge.

Long time near him the maiden spent,
And served him meek and reverent,
Till the great hermit, pleased with her,
Thus spoke unto his minister:
'Grateful am I for all thy care:
Blest maiden, speak, thy wish declare.'
The sweet-voiced nymph rejoiced to see
The favour of the devotee,
And to that eloquent old man,
Most eloquent she thus began:
'Thou hast, by heavenly grace sustained,
Close union with the Godhead gained.
I long, O Saint, to see a son
By force of holy penance won.
Unwed, a maiden life I live:
A son to me, thy suppliant, give.'
The saint with favour heard her prayer,
And gave a son exceeding fair.
Him, Chúli's spiritual child,
His mother Brahmadatta[1] styled.
King Brahmadatta, rich and great,
In Kámpilí maintained his state,
Ruling, like Indrá in his bliss,
His fortunate metropolis.
King Kuśanábha planned that he
His hundred daughters' lord should be.
To him, obedient to his call,
The happy monarch gave them all.
Like Indra then he took the hand
Of every maiden of the band.
Soon as the hand of each young maid
In Brahmadatta's palm was laid,
Deformity and cares away,

[1] Literally, Given by *Brahma* or devout contemplation.

She shone in beauty bright and gay.
Their freedom from the Wind-God's might
Saw Kuśanábha with delight.
Each glance that on their forms he threw
Filled him with raptures ever new.
Then when the rites were all complete,
With highest marks of honour meet
The bridegroom with his brides he sent
To his great seat of government.
The nymph received with pleasant speech
Her daughters; and, embracing each,
Upon their forms she fondly gazed,
And royal Kuśanábha praised.

CANTO XXXV.

VIŚVÁMITRA'S LINEAGE.

'The rites were o'er, the maids were wed,
The bridegroom to his home was sped.
The sonless monarch bade prepare
A sacrifice to gain an heir.
Then Kuśa, Brahmá's son, appeared,
And thus King Kuśanábha cheered:
'Thou shalt, my child, obtain a son
Like thine own self, O holy one.
Through him for ever, Gádhi named,
Shalt thou in all the worlds be famed.'
'He spoke, and vanished from the sight
To Brahmá's world of endless light.
Time fled, and, as the saint foretold,
Gádhi was born, the holy-souled.
My sire was he; through him I trace
My line from royal Kuśa's race.
My sister—elder-born was she—
The pure and good Satyavatí,[1]
Was to the great Richíka wed.
Still faithful to her husband dead,
She followed him, most noble dame,
And, raised to heaven in human frame,

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[1] Now called Kośí (Cosy) corrupted from Kauśikí, daughter of Kuśa.

'This is one of those personifications of rivers so frequent in the Grecian mythology, but in the similar myths is seen the impress of the genius of each people, austere and profoundly religious in India, graceful and devoted to the worship of external beauty in Greece.' GORRESIO.

A pure celestial stream became.
Down from Himálaya's snowy height,
In floods for ever fair and bright,
My sister's holy waves are hurled
To purify and glad the world.
Now on Himálaya's side I dwell
Because I love my sister well.
She, for her faith and truth renowned,
Most loving to her husband found,
High-fated, firm in each pure vow,
Is queen of all the rivers now.
Bound by a vow I left her side
And to the Perfect convent hied.
There, by the aid 'twas thine to lend,
Made perfect, all my labours end.
Thus, mighty Prince, I now have told
My race and lineage, high and old,
And local tales of long ago
Which thou, O Ráma, fain wouldst know.
As I have sate rehearsing thus
The midnight hour is come on us.
Now, Ráma, sleep, that nothing may
Our journey of to-morrow stay.
No leaf on any tree is stirred:
Hushed in repose are beast and bird:
Where'er you turn, on every side,
Dense shades of night the landscape hide.
The light of eve is fled: the skies,
Thick-studded with their host of eyes,
Seem a star-forest overhead,
Where signs and constellations spread.
Now rises, with his pure cold ray,
The moon that drives the shades away,
And with his gentle influence brings

Joy to the hearts of living things.
Now, stealing from their lairs, appear
The beasts to whom the night is dear.
Now spirits walk, and every power
That revels in the midnight hour.'

The mighty hermit's tale was o'er,
He closed his lips and spoke no more.
The holy men on every side,
'Well done! well done,' with reverence cried;
'The mighty men of Kuśa's seed
Were ever famed for righteous deed.
Like Brahmá's self in glory shine
The high-souled lords of Kuśa's line.
And thy great name is sounded most,
O Saint, amid the noble host.
And thy dear sister—fairest she
Of streams, the high-born Kauśikí—
Diffusing virtue where she flows,
New splendour on thy lineage throws.'
Thus by the chief of saints addressed
The son of Gádhi turned to rest;
So, when his daily course is done,
Sinks to his rest the beaming sun.
Ráma, with Lakshmaṇ, somewhat stirred
To marvel by the tales they heard,
Turned also to his couch, to close
His eyelids in desired repose.

CANTO XXXVI.

THE BIRTH OF GANGÁ.

The hours of night now waning fast
On Śoṇa's pleasant shore they passed.
Then, when the dawn began to break,
To Ráma thus the hermit spake:
'The light of dawn is breaking clear,
The hour of morning rites is near.
Rise, Ráma, rise, dear son, I pray,
And make thee ready for the way.'
Then Ráma rose, and finished all
His duties at the hermit's call,
Prepared with joy the road to take,
And thus again in question spake:
'Here fair and deep the Śoṇa flows,
And many an isle its bosom shows:
What way, O Saint, will lead us o'er
And land us on the farther shore?
The saint replied: 'The way I choose
Is that which pious hermits use.'
For many a league they journeyed on
Till, when the sun of mid-day shone,
The hermit-haunted flood was seen
Of Jáhnaví,[1] the Rivers' Queen.
Soon as the holy stream they viewed,
Thronged with a white-winged multitude
Of sáraṣes[2] and swans,[3] delight

[1] One of the names of the Ganges considered as the daughter of Jahnu. See Canto XLIV.

[2] The Indian Crane.

[3] Or, rather, geese.

Possessed them at the lovely sight;
And then prepared the hermit band
To halt upon that holy strand.
They bathed as Scripture bids, and paid
Oblations due to God and shade.
To Fire they burnt the offerings meet,
And sipped the oil, like Amrit sweet.
Then pure and pleased they sate around
Saint Viśvámitra on the ground.
The holy men of lesser note,
In due degree, sate more remote,
While Raghu's sons took nearer place
By virtue of their rank and race.
Then Ráma said: 'O Saint, I yearn
The three-pathed Gangá's tale to learn.'

Thus urged, the sage recounted both
The birth of Gangá and her growth:
'The mighty hill with metals stored,
Himálaya, is the mountains' lord,
The father of a lovely pair
Of daughters fairest of the fair:
Their mother, offspring of the will
Of Meru, everlasting hill,
Mená, Himálaya's darling, graced
With beauty of her dainty waist.
Gangá was elder-born: then came
The fair one known by Umá's name.
Then all the Gods of heaven, in need
Of Gangá's help their vows to speed,
To great Himálaya came and prayed
The Mountain King to yield the maid.
He, not regardless of the weal
Of the three worlds, with holy zeal
His daughter to the Immortals gave,

Gangá whose waters cleanse and save,
Who roams at pleasure, fair and free,
Purging all sinners, to the sea.
The three-pathed Gangá thus obtained,
The Gods their heavenly homes regained.
Long time the sister Umá passed
In vows austere and rigid fast,
And the king gave the devotee
Immortal Rudra's[1] bride to be,
Matching with that unequalled Lord
His Umá through the worlds adored.
So now a glorious station fills
Each daughter of the King of Hills:
One honoured as the noblest stream,
One mid the Goddesses supreme.
Thus Gangá, King Himálaya's child,
The heavenly river, undefiled,
Rose bearing with her to the sky
Her waves that bless and purify.'

[1] A name of the God Śiva.

I am compelled to omit Cantos XXXVII and XXXVIII, THE GLORY OF UMÁ, and THE BIRTH OF KÁRTIKEYA, as both in subject and language offensive to modern taste. They will be found in the Appendix in Schlegel's Latin translation.

CANTO XXXIX.

THE SONS OF SAGAR.

The saint in accents sweet and clear
Thus told his tale for Ráma's ear,
And thus anew the holy man
A legend to the prince began:
'There reigned a pious monarch o'er
Ayodhyá in the days of yore:
Sagar his name: no child had he,
And children much he longed to see.
His honoured consort, fair of face,
Sprang from Vidarbha's royal race,
Keśiní, famed from early youth
For piety and love of truth.
Arishṭanemi's daughter fair,
With whom no maiden might compare
In beauty, though the earth is wide,
Sumati, was his second bride.
With his two queens afar he went,
And weary days in penance spent,
Fervent, upon Himálaya's hill
Where springs the stream called Bhrigu's rill.
Nor did he fail that saint to please
With his devout austerities,
And, when a hundred years had fled,
Thus the most truthful Bhrigu said:
'From thee, O Sagar, blameless King,
A mighty host of sons shall spring,
And thou shalt win a glorious name

Which none, O Chief, but thou shall claim.
One of thy queens a son shall bear
Maintainer of thy race and heir;
And of the other there shall be
Sons sixty thousand born to thee.'

Thus as he spake, with one accord,
To win the grace of that high lord,
The queens, with palms together laid,
In humble supplication prayed:
'Which queen, O Bráhman, of the pair,
The many, or the one shall bear?
Most eager, Lord, are we to know,
And as thou sayest be it so.'
With his sweet speech the saint replied:
'Yourselves, O Queens, the choice decide.
Your own discretion freely use
Which shall the one or many choose:
One shall the race and name uphold,
The host be famous, strong, and bold.
Which will have which?' Then Keśiní
The mother of one heir would be.
Sumati, sister of the king[1]
Of all the birds that ply the wing,
To that illustrious Bráhman sued
That she might bear the multitude
Whose fame throughout the world should sound
For mighty enterprise renowned.
Around the saint the monarch went,
Bowing his head, most reverent.
Then with his wives, with willing feet,
Resought his own imperial seat.
Time passed. The elder consort bare

[1] Garuda.

A son called Asamanj, the heir.
Then Sumati, the younger, gave
Birth to a gourd,[*] O hero brave,
Whose rind, when burst and cleft in two,
Gave sixty thousand babes to view.
All these with care the nurses laid
In jars of oil; and there they stayed,
Till, youthful age and strength complete,
Forth speeding from each dark retreat,
All peers in valour, years, and might,
The sixty thousand came to light.
Prince Asamanj, brought up with care,
Scourge of his foes, was made the heir.
But liegemen's boys he used to cast
To Sarjú's waves that hurried past,
Laughing the while in cruel glee
Their dying agonies to see.
This wicked prince who aye withstood
The counsel of the wise and good,
Who plagued the people in his hate,
His father banished from the state.
His son, kind-spoken, brave, and tall,
Was Anśumán, beloved of all.
Long years flew by. The king decreed
To slay a sacrificial steed.
Consulting with his priestly band
He vowed the rite his soul had planned,
And, Veda-skilled, by their advice
Made ready for the sacrifice.

---

[*] Ikshváku, the name of a king of Ayodhyá who is regarded as the founder of the Solar race, means also *a gourd*. Hence, perhaps, the myth.

CANTO XL.

THE CLEAVING OF THE EARTH.

The hermit ceased: the tale was done:
Then in a transport Raghu's son
Again addressed the ancient sire
Resplendent as a burning fire:
'O holy man, I fain would hear
The tale repeated full and clear
How he from whom my sires descend
Brought the great rite to happy end.'
The hermit answered with a smile:
'Then listen, son of Raghu, while
My legendary tale proceeds
To tell of high-souled Sagar's deeds.
Within the spacious plain that lies
From where Himálaya's heights arise
To where proud Vindhya's rival chain
Looks down upon the subject plain—
A land the best for rites declared [1]—
His sacrifice the king prepared.
And Anśumán the prince—for so
Sagar advised—with ready bow

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[1] 'The region here spoken of is called in the Laws of Manu *Madhyadeśa* or the middle region. 'The region situated between the Himálaya and the Vindhya Mountains...............is called *Madhyadeśa*, or the middle region; the space comprised between these two mountains from the eastern to the western sea is called by sages Áryávartta, *the seat of honourable men.*' (MANU, II, 21, 22.) The Sanskrit Indians called themselves Áryans, which means *honourable, noble*, to distinguish themselves from the surrounding nations of different origin.' GORRESIO.

Was borne upon a mighty car
To watch the steed who roamed afar.
But Indra, monarch of the skies,
Veiling his form in demon guise,
Came down upon the appointed day
And drove the victim horse away.
Reft of the steed the priests, distressed,
The master of the rite addressed:
'Upon the sacred day by force
A robber takes the victim horse.
Haste, King! now let the thief be slain;
Bring thou the charger back again:
The sacred rite prevented thus
Brings scathe and woe to all of us.
Rise, Monarch, and provide with speed
That naught its happy course impede.'

King Sagar in his crowded court
Gave ear unto the priests' report.
He summoned straightway to his side
His sixty thousand sons, and cried:
'Brave sons of mine, I knew not how
These demons are so mighty now:
The priests began the rite so well
All sanctified with prayer and spell.
If in the depths of earth he hide,
Or lurk beneath the ocean's tide,
Pursue, dear sons, the robber's track;
Slay him and bring the charger back.
The whole of this broad earth explore,
Sea-garlanded, from shore to shore:
Yea, dig her up with might and main
Until you see the horse again.
Deep let your searching labour reach,
A league in depth dug out by each.

The robber of our horse pursue,
And please your sire who orders you.
My grandson, I, this priestly train,
Till the steed comes, will here remain.'

Their eager hearts with transport burned
As to their task the heróes turned.
Obedient to their father, they
Through earth's recesses forced their way.
With iron arms' unflinching toil
Each dug a league beneath the soil.
Earth, cleft asunder, groaned in pain,
As emulous they plied amain
Sharp-pointed coulter, pick, and bar,
Hard as the bolts of Indra are.
Then loud the horrid clamour rose
Of monsters dying neath their blows,
Giant and demon, fiend and snake,
That in earth's core their dwelling make.
They dug, in ire that naught could stay,
Through sixty thousand leagues their way,
Cleaving the earth with matchless strength
Till hell itself they reached at length.
Thus digging searched they Jambudvíp[1]
With all its hills and mountains steep.
Then a great fear began to shake
The heart of God, bard, fiend, and snake,
And all distressed in spirit went
Before the Sire Omnipotent.
With signs of woe in every face
They sought the mighty Father's grace,
And trembling still and ill at ease

[1] Said to be so called from the Jambu, or Rose Apple, abounding in it, and signifying according to the Purânas the central division of the world, the known world.

Addressed their Lord in words like these:
'The sons of Sagar, Sire benign,
Pierce the whole earth with mine on mine,
And as their ruthless work they ply
Innumerable creatures die.
'This is the thief,' the princes say,
'Who stole our victim steed away.
This marred the rite, and caused us ill.'
And so their guiltless blood they spill.'

CANTO XLI.

KAPIL.

The Father lent a gracious ear
And listened to their tale of fear,
And kindly to the Gods replied
Whom woe and death had terrified:
'The wisest Vásudeva,[1] who
The Immortals' foe, fierce Madhu, slew,
Regards broad Earth with love and pride,
And guards, in Kapil's form, his bride.[2]
His kindled wrath will quickly fall
On the king's sons and burn them all.
This cleaving of the earth his eye
Foresaw in ages long gone by:
He knew with prescient soul the fate
That Sagar's children should await.'

The Three-and-thirty,[3] freed from fear,
Sought their bright homes with hopeful cheer.

---

[1] Here used as a name of Vishṇu.

[2] Kings are called the husbands of their kingdoms or of the earth; 'She and his kingdom were his only brides.' *Raghuvanśa.*

'Doubly divorced! Bad men, you violate
A double marriage, 'twixt my crown and me,
And then between me and my married wife.'

King Richard II. Act V. Sc. I.

[3] The thirty-three Gods are said in the *Aitareya Bráhmaṇa*, Book I. ch. II. 10. to be the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, the twelve Ádityas, Prajápati, either Brahmá or Daksha, and Vashaṭkára or deified oblation. This must have been the actual number at the beginning of the Vedic religion gradually increased by successive mythical and religious creations till the Indian Pantheon was crowded with abstractions of every kind. Through the reverence with which the words of the Veda were regarded, the immense host of multiplied divinities, in later times, still bore the name of the Thirty-three Gods.

Still rose the great tempestuous sound
As Sagar's children pierced the ground.
When thus the whole broad earth was cleft,
And not a spot unsearched was left,
Back to their home the princes sped,
And thus unto their father said:
'We searched the earth from side to side,
While countless hosts of creatures died.
Our conquering feet in triumph trod
On snake and demon, fiend and God;
But yet we failed, with all our toil,
To find the robber and the spoil.
What can we more? If more we can,
Devise, O King, and tell thy plan.'

His children's speech King Sagar heard,
And answered thus, to anger stirred:
'Dig on, and ne'er your labour stay
Till through earth's depths you force your way.
Then smite the robber dead, and bring
The charger back with triumphing.'

The sixty thousand chiefs obeyed:
Deep through the earth their way they made.
Deep as they dug and deeper yet
The immortal elephant they met,
Famed Virúpáksha[1] vast of size,

---

[1] 'One of the elephants which, according to an ancient belief popular in India, supported the earth with their enormous backs; when one of these elephants shook his wearied head the earth trembled with its woods and hills. An idea, or rather a mythical fancy, similar to this, but reduced to proportions less grand, is found in Virgil when he speaks of Enceladus buried under Ætna.

Fama est Enceladi semiustum fulmine corpus
Urgeri mole hac, ingentemque insuper Ætnam
Impositam, ruptis flammam expirare caminis;
Et fessum quoties mutat latus, intremere omnem
Murmure Trinacriam, et cœlum subtexere fumo.' Æneid. Lib. III.

Gorresio.

Upon whose head the broad earth lies:
The mighty beast who earth sustains
With shaggy hills and wooded plains.
When, with the changing moon, distressed,
And longing for a moment's rest,
His mighty head the monster shakes,
Earth to the bottom reels and quakes.
Around that warder strong and vast
With reverential steps they passed,
Nor, when the honour due was paid,
Their downward search through earth delayed.
But turning from the east aside
Southward again their task they plied.
There Mahápadma held his place,
The best of all his mighty race,
Like some huge hill, of monstrous girth,
Upholding on his head the earth.
When the vast beast the princes saw,
They marvelled and were filled with awe.
The sons of high-souled Sagar round
That elephant in reverence wound.
Then in the western region they
With might unwearied cleft their way.
There saw they with astonisht eyes
Saumanas, beast of mountain size.
Round him with circling steps they went
With greetings kind and reverent.

On, on—no thought of rest or stay—
They reached the seat of Soma's sway.
There saw they Bhadra, white as snow,
With lucky marks that fortune show,
Bearing the earth upon his head.
Round him they paced with solemn tread,
And honoured him with greetings kind;

Then downward yet their way they mined.
They gained the tract 'twixt east and north
Whose fame is ever blazoned forth,[1]
And by a storm of rage impelled,
Digging through earth their course they held.
Then all the princes, lofty-souled,
Of wondrous vigour, strong and bold,
Saw Vásudeva[2] standing there
In Kapil's form he loved to wear,
And near the everlasting God
The victim charger cropped the sod.
They saw with joy and eager eyes
The fancied robber and the prize,
And on him rushed the furious band
Crying aloud, Stand, villain! stand!
'Avaunt! avaunt!' great Kapil cried,
His bosom flusht with passion's tide;
Then by his might that proud array
All scorcht to heaps of ashes lay.[3]

---

[1] 'The Devas and Asuras (Gods and Titans) fought in the east, the south, the west, and the north, and the Devas were defeated by the Asuras in all these directions. They then fought in the north-eastern direction; there the Devas did not sustain defeat. This direction is *aparájitá, i. e.* unconquerable. Thence one should do work in this direction, and have it done there; for such a one (alone) is able to clear off his debts.' HAUG'S *Aitareya Bráhmaṇam,* Vol. II., p. 53.

The debts here spoken of are a man's religious obligations to the Gods, the Pitaras or Manes, and men.

[2] Vishṇu.

[3] 'It appears to me that this mythical story has reference to the volcanic phenomena of nature. Kapil may very possibly be that hidden fiery force which suddenly unprisons itself and bursts forth in volcanic effects. Kapil is, moreover, one of the names of Agni the God of Fire.' GORRESIO.

CANTO XLII.

SAGAR'S SACRIFICE.

Then to the prince his grandson, bright
With his own fame's unborrowed light,
King Sagar thus began to say,
Marvelling at his sons' delay:
'Thou art a warrior skilled and bold,
Match for the mighty men of old.
Now follow on thine uncles' course
And track the robber of the horse.
To guard thee take thy sword and bow,
For huge and strong are beasts below.
There to the reverend reverence pay,
And kill the foes who check thy way;
Then turn successful home and see
My sacrifice complete through thee.'

Obedient to the high-souled lord
Grasped Anśumán his bow and sword,
And hurried forth the way to trace
With youth and valour's eager pace.
On sped he by the path he found
Dug by his uncles underground.
The warder elephant he saw
Whose size and strength pass Nature's law,
Who bears the world's tremendous weight,
Whom God, fiend, giant venerate,
Bird, serpent, and each flitting shade.
To him the honour meet he paid
With circling steps and greeting due,
And further prayed him, if he knew,

To tell him of his uncles' weal,
And who had dared the horse to steal.
To him in war and council tried
The warder elephant replied:
'Thou, son of Asamanj, shalt lead
In triumph back the rescued steed.'

As to each warder beast he came
And questioned all, his words the same,
The honoured youth with gentle speech
Drew eloquent reply from each,
That fortune should his steps attend,
And with the horse he home should wend.
Cheered with the grateful answer, he
Passed on with step more light and free,
And reached with careless heart the place
Where lay in ashes Sagar's race.
Then sank the spirit of the chief
Beneath that shock of sudden grief,
And with a bitter cry of woe
He mourned his kinsmen fallen so.
He saw, weighed down by woe and care,
The victim charger roaming there.
Yet would the pious chieftain fain
Oblations offer to the slain:
But, needing water for the rite,
He looked and there was none in sight.
His quick eye searching all around
The uncle of his kinsmen found,
King Garuḍ, best beyond compare
Of birds who wing the fields of air.
Then thus unto the weeping man
The son of Vinatá[1] began:

---

[1] Garuḍ was the son of Kaśyap and Vinatá.

'Grieve not, O hero, for their fall
Who died a death approved of all.
Of mighty strength, they met their fate
By Kapil's hand whom none can mate.
Pour forth for them no earthly wave,
A holier flood their spirits crave.
If, daughter of the Lord of Snow,
Gangá would turn her stream below,
Her waves that cleanse all mortal stain
Would wash their ashes pure again.
Yea, when her flood whom all revere
Rolls o'er the dust that moulders here,
The sixty thousand, freed from sin,
A home in Indra's heaven shall win.
Go, and with ceaseless labour try
To draw the Goddess from the sky.
Return, and with thee take the steed;
So shall thy grandsire's rite succeed.'

Prince Anśumán the strong and brave
Followed the rede Suparṇa[1] gave.
The glorious hero took the horse,
And homeward quickly bent his course.
Straight to the anxious king he hied,
Whom lustral rites had purified,
The mournful story to unfold
And all the king of birds had told.
The tale of woe the monarch heard,
Nor longer was the rite deferred:
With care and just observance he
Accomplished all, as texts decree.
The rites performed, with brighter fame,
Mighty in counsel, home he came.

---

[1] Garuḍ.

He longed to bring the river down,
But found no plan his wish to crown.
He pondered long with anxious thought,
But saw no way to what he sought.
Thus thirty thousand years he spent,
And then to heaven the monarch went.

CANTO XLIII.

BHAGÍRATH.

When Sagar thus had bowed to fate,
The lords and commons of the state
Approved with ready heart and will
Prince Anśumán his throne to fill.
He ruled, a mighty king, unblamed,
Sire of Dilípa justly famed.
To him, his child and worthy heir,
The king resigned his kingdom's care,
And on Himálaya's pleasant side
His task austere of penance plied.
Bright as a God in clear renown
He planned to bring pure Gangá down.
There on his fruitless hope intent
Twice sixteen thousand years he spent,
And in the grove of hermits stayed
Till bliss in heaven his rites repaid.
Dilípa then, the good and great,
Soon as he learnt his kinsmen's fate,
Bowed down by woe, with troubled mind,
Pondering long no cure could find.
'How can I bring,' the mourner sighed,
'To cleanse their dust, the heavenly tide?
How can I give them rest, and save
Their spirits with the offered wave?'
Long with this thought his bosom skilled
In holy discipline was filled.
A son was born, Bhagírath named,
Above all men for virtue famed.

Dilípa many a rite ordained,
And thirty thousand seasons reigned.
But when no hope the king could see
His kinsmen from their woe to free,
The lord of men, by sickness tried,
Obeyed the law of fate, and died;
He left the kingdom to his son,
And gained the heaven his deeds had won.
The good Bhagírath, royal sage,
Had no fair son to cheer his age.
He, great in glory, pure in will,
Longing for sons was childless still.
Then on one wish, one thought intent,
Planning the heavenly stream's descent,
Leaving his ministers the care
And burden of his state to bear,
Dwelling in far Gokarṇa[1] he
Engaged in long austerity.
With senses checked, with arms upraised,
Five fires[2] around and o'er him blazed.
Each weary month the hermit passed
Breaking but once his awful fast.
In winter's chill the brook his bed,
In rain, the clouds to screen his head.
Thousands of years he thus endured
Till Brahmá's favour was assured,
And the high Lord of living things
Looked kindly on his sufferings.
With trooping Gods the Sire came near
The king who plied his task austere:
'Blest Monarch, of a glorious race,
Thy fervent rites have won my grace.

[1] A famous and venerated region near the Malabar coast.

[2] That is four fires and the sun.

Well hast thou wrought thine awful task:
Some boon in turn, O Hermit, ask.'

Bhagírath, rich in glory's light,
The hero with the arm of might,
Thus to the Lord of earth and sky
Raised suppliant hands and made reply:
'If the great God his favour deigns,
And my long toil its fruit obtains,
Let Sagar's sons receive from me
Libations that they long to see.
Let Gangá with her holy wave
The ashes of the heroes lave,
That so my kinsmen may ascend
To heavenly bliss that ne'er shall end.
And give, I pray, O God, a son,
Nor let my house be all undone.
Sire of the worlds! be this the grace
Bestowed upon Ikshváku's race.'

The Sire, when thus the king had prayed,
In sweet kind words his answer made:
'High, high thy thought and wishes are,
Bhagírath of the mighty car!
Ikshváku's line is blest in thee,
And as thou prayest it shall be.
Gangá, whose waves in Swarga[1] flow,
Is daughter of the Lord of Snow.
Win Śiva that his aid be lent
To hold her in her mid descent,
For earth alone will never bear
Those torrents hurled from upper air;
And none may hold her weight but He,
The Trident-wielding deity.'

---

[1] Heaven.

Thus having said, the Lord supreme
Addressed him to the heavenly stream;
And then with Gods and Maruts[1] went
To heaven above the firmament.

---

[1] Wind-Gods.

CANTO XLIV.

THE DESCENT OF GANGÁ.

The Lord of life the skies regained :
The fervent king a year remained
With arms upraised, refusing rest
While with one toe the earth he pressed,
Still as a post, with sleepless eye,
The air his food, his roof the sky.
The year had past. Then Umá's lord,[1]
King of creation, world-adored,
Thus spoke to great Bhagírath: 'I
Well pleased thy wish will gratify,
And on my head her waves shall fling
The daughter of the Mountains' King!'

He stood upon the lofty crest
　　That crowns the Lord of Snow,
And bade the river of the Blest
　　Descend on earth below.
Himálaya's child, adored of all,
　　The haughty mandate heard,
And her proud bosom, at the call,
　　With furious wrath was stirred.
Down from her channel in the skies
　　With awful might she sped
With a giant's rush, in a giant's size,
　　On Śiva's holy head.
'He calls me,' in her wrath she cried,
　　'And all my flood shall sweep

---

[1] Śiva.

And whirl him in its whelming tide
To hell's profoundest deep.'
He held the river on his head,
And kept her wandering, where,
Dense as Himálaya's woods, were spread
The tangles of his hair.
No way to earth she found, ashamed,
Though long and sore she strove,
Condemned, until her pride were tamed,
Amid his locks to rove.
There, many lengthening seasons through,
The wildered river ran:
Bhagírath saw it, and anew
His penance dire began.
Then Śiva, for the hermit's sake,
Bade her long wanderings end,
And sinking into Vindu's lake
Her weary waves descend.
From Gangá, by the God set free,
Seven noble rivers came;
Hládiní, Pávaní, and she
Called Naliní by name:
These rolled their lucid waves along
And sought the eastern side.
Suchakshu, Sítá fair and strong,
And Sindhu's mighty tide—[1]
These to the region of the west
With joyful waters sped:
The seventh, the brightest and the best,
Flowed where Bhagírath led.

---

[1] The lake Vindu does not exist. Of the seven rivers here mentioned two only, the Ganges and the Sindhu or Indus, are known to geographers. Hládiní means the Gladdener, Pávaní the Purifier, Naliní the Lotus-clad, and Suchakshu the Fair-eyed.

On Śiva's head descending first
A rest the torrents found;
Then down in all their might they burst
And roared along the ground.
On countless glittering scales the beam
Of rosy morning flashed,
Where fish and dolphins through the stream
Fallen and falling dashed.
Then bards who chant celestial lays
And nymphs of heavenly birth
Flocked round upon that flood to gaze
That streamed from sky to earth.
The Gods themselves from every sphere,
Incomparably bright,
Borne in their golden cars drew near
To see the wondrous sight.
The cloudless sky was all aflame
With the light of a hundred suns
Where'er the shining chariots came
That bore those holy ones.
So flashed the air with crested snakes
And fish of every hue
As when the lightning's glory breaks
Through fields of summer blue.
And white foam-clouds and silver spray
Were wildly tossed on high,
Like swans that urge their homeward way
Across the autumn sky.
Now ran the river calm and clear
With current strong and deep;
Now slowly broadened to a mere,
Or scarcely seemed to creep.
Now o'er a length of sandy plain
Her tranquil course she held;

Now rose her waves and sank again,
By refluent waves repelled.
So falling first on Śiva's head,
Thence rushing to their earthly bed,
In ceaseless fall the waters streamed,
And pure with holy lustre gleamed.
Then every spirit, sage, and bard,
Condemned to earth by sentence hard,
Pressed eagerly around the tide
That Śiva's touch had sanctified.
Then they whom heavenly doom had hurled,*
Accursed, to this lower world,
Touched the pure wave, and freed from sin
Resought the skies and entered in.
And all the world was glad, whereon
The glorious water flowed and shone,
For sin and stain were banished thence
By the sweet river's influence.
First, in a car of heavenly frame,
The royal saint of deathless name,
Bhagírath, very glorious rode,
And after him fair Gangá flowed.
God, sage, and bard, the chief in place
Of spirits and the Nága race,
Nymph, giant, fiend, in long array
Sped where Bhagírath led the way;
And all the hosts the flood that swim
Followed the stream that followed him.
Where'er the great Bhagírath led,
There ever glorious Gangá fled,
The best of floods, the rivers' queen,
Whose waters wash the wicked clean.

It chanced that Jahnu, great and good,
Engaged with holy offerings stood;

The river spread her waves around
Flooding his sacrificial ground.
The saint in anger marked her pride,
And at one draught her stream he dried.
Then God, and sage, and bard, afraid,
To noble high-souled Jahnu prayed,
And begged that he would kindly deem
His own dear child that holy stream.
Moved by their suit, he soothed their fears
And loosed her waters from his ears.
Hence Gangá through the world is styled
Both Jáhnaví and Jahnu's child.
Then onward still she followed fast,
And reached the great sea bank at last.
Thence deep below her way she made
To end those rites so long delayed.
The monarch reached the Ocean's side,
And still behind him Gangá hied.
He sought the depths which open lay
Where Sagar's sons had dug their way.
So leading through earth's nether caves
The river's purifying waves,
Over his kinsmen's dust the lord
His funeral libation poured.
Soon as the flood their dust bedewed,
Their spirits gained beatitude,
And all in heavenly bodies dressed
Rose to the skies' eternal rest.

Then thus to King Bhagírath said
Brahmá, when, coming at the head
Of all his bright celestial train,
He saw those spirits freed from stain:
'Well done! great Prince of men, well done!
Thy kinsmen bliss and heaven have won.

The sons of Sagar mighty-souled,
Are with the Blest, as Gods, enrolled.
Long as the Ocean's flood shall stand
Upon the border of the land,
So long shall Sagar's sons remain,
And, godlike, rank in heaven retain.
Gangá thine eldest child shall be,
Called from thy name Bhágírathí;
Named also—for her waters fell
From heaven and flow through earth and hell—
Tripathagá, stream of the skies,
Because three paths she glorifies.
And, mighty King, 'tis given thee now
To free thee and perform thy vow.
No longer, happy Prince, delay
Drink-offerings to thy kin to pay.
For this the holiest Sagar sighed,
But mourned the boon he sought denied.
Then Ansumán, dear Prince! although
No brighter name the world could show,
Strove long the heavenly flood to gain
To visit earth, but strove in vain.
Nor was she by the sages' peer,
Blest with all virtues, most austere,
Thy sire Dilípa, hither brought,
Though with fierce prayers the boon he sought.
But thou, O King, hast earned success,
And won high fame which God will bless.
Through thee, O victor of thy foes,
On earth this heavenly Gangá flows,
And thou hast gained the meed divine
That waits on virtue such as thine.
Now in her ever holy wave
Thyself, O best of heroes, lave:

So shalt thou, pure from every sin,
The blessed fruit of merit win.
Now for thy kin who died of yore
The meet libations duly pour.
Above the heavens I now ascend:
Depart, and bliss thy steps attend.'

Thus to the mighty king who broke
His foemens' might, Lord Brahmá spoke,
And with his Gods around him rose
To his own heaven of blest repose.
The royal sage no more delayed,
But, the libation duly paid,
Home to his regal city hied
With water cleansed and purified.
There ruled he his ancestral state,
Best of all men, most fortunate.
And all the people joyed again
In good Bhagírath's gentle reign.
Rich, prosperous, and blest were they,
And grief and sickness fled away.
Thus, Ráma, I at length have told
How Gangá came from heaven of old.
Now, for the evening passes swift,
I wish thee each auspicious gift.
This story of the flood's descent
Will give—for 'tis most excellent—
Wealth, purity, fame, length of days,
And to the skies its hearers raise.

CANTO XLV.

THE QUEST OF THE AMRIT.

High and more high their wonder rose
As the strange story reached its close,
And thus, with Lakshmaṇ, Ráma, best
Of Raghu's sons, the saint addressed :
'Most wondrous is the tale which thou
Hast told of heavenly Gangá, how
From realms above descending she
Flowed through the land and filled the sea.
In thinking o'er what thou hast said
The night has like a moment fled,
Whose hours in musing have been spent
Upon thy words most excellent :
So much, O holy Sage, thy lore
Has charmed us with this tale of yore'.

Day dawned. The morning rites were done,
And the victorious Raghu's son
Addressed the ságe in words like these,
Rich in his long austerities :
'The night is past ; the morn is clear ;
Told is the tale so good to hear ;
Now o'er that river let us go,
Three-pathed, the best of all that flow.
This boat stands ready on the shore
To bear the holy hermits o'er,
Who of thy coming warned, in haste,
The barge upon the bank have placed.'

And Kuśik's son approved his speech,
And moving to the sandy beach,

Placed in the boat the hermit band,
And reached the river's farther strand.
On the north bank their feet they set,
And greeted all the saints they met.
On Gangá's shore they lighted down,
And saw Viśálá's lovely town.
Thither, the princes by his side,
The best of holy hermits hied.
It was a town exceeding fair
That might with heaven itself compare.
Then, suppliant palm to palm applied,
Famed Ráma asked his holy guide:
'O best of hermits, say what race
Of monarchs rules this lovely place.
Dear master, let my prayer prevail,
For much I long to hear the tale.'
Moved by his words, the saintly man
Viśálá's ancient tale began:
'List, Ráma, list, with closest heed
The tale of Indra's wondrous deed,
And mark me as I truly tell
What here in ancient days befell.
Ere Krita's famous Age[1] had fled,
Strong were the sons of Diti[2] bred;
And Aditi's brave children too
Were very mighty, good, and true.
The rival brothers fierce and bold
Were sons of Kaśyap lofty-souled.
Of sister mothers born, they vied,
Brood against brood, in jealous pride.
Once, as they say, band met with band,

[1] The first or Golden Age.

[2] Diti and Aditi were wives of Kaśyap, and mothers respectively of Titans and Gods.

And, joined in awful council, planned
To live, unharmed by age and time,
Immortal in their youthful prime.
Then this was, after due debate,
The counsel of the wise and great,
To churn with might the milky sea [1]
The life-bestowing drink to free.
This planned, they seized the Serpent King,
Vásuki, for their churning-string,
And Mandar's mountain for their pole,
And churned with all their heart and soul.
As thus, a thousand seasons through,
This way and that the snake they drew,
Biting the rocks, each tortured head
A very deadly venom shed.
Thence, bursting like a mighty flame,
A pestilential poison came,
Consuming, as it onward ran,
The home of God, and fiend, and man.
Then all the suppliant Gods in fear
To Śankar, [2] mighty lord, drew near.
To Rudra, King of Herds, dismayed,
'Save us, O save us, Lord!' they prayed.
Then Vishṇu, bearing shell, and mace,
And discus, showed his radiant face,
And thus addressed in smiling glee
The Trident-wielding deity:
'What treasure first the Gods upturn
From troubled Ocean, as they churn,
Should—for thou art the eldest—be
Conferred, O best of Gods, on thee.'

---

[1] One of the seven seas surrounding as many worlds in concentric rings.

[2] Śankar and Rudra are names of Śiva.

Then come, and for thy birthright's sake,
This venom as thy firstfruits take.'
He spoke, and vanished from their sight.
When Śiva saw their wild affright,
And heard his speech by whom is borne
The mighty bow of bending horn,[1]
The poisoned flood at once he quaffed
As 'twere the Amrit's heavenly draught.
Then from the Gods departing went
Śiva, the Lord pre-eminent.
The host of Gods and Asurs still
Kept churning with one heart and will.
But Mandar's mountain, whirling round,
Pierced to the depths below the ground.
Then Gods and bards in terror flew
To him who mighty Madhu slew.
'Help of all beings! more than all,
The Gods on thee for aid may call.
Ward off, O mighty-armed! our fate,
And bear up Mandar's threatening weight.'
Then Vishṇu, as their need was sore,
The semblance of a tortoise wore,
And in the bed of Ocean lay
The mountain on his back to stay.
Then he, the soul pervading all,
Whose locks in radiant tresses fall,
One mighty arm extended still,
And grasped the summit of the hill.
So ranged among the Immortals, he
Joined in the churning of the sea.

---

[1] '*Śárṅgin,* literally *carrying a bow of horn,* is a constantly recurring name of Vishṇu. The Indians also, therefore, knew the art of making bows out of the horns of antelopes or wild goats, which Homer ascribes to the Trojans of the heroic age.' SCHLEGEL.

A thousand years had reached their close,
When calmly from the ocean rose
The gentle sage[1] with staff and can,
Lord of the art of healing man.
Then as the waters foamed and boiled,
As churning still the Immortals toiled,
Of winning face and lovely frame,
Forth sixty million fair ones came.
Born of the foam and water, these
Were aptly named Apsarases.[2]
Each had her maids. The tongue would fail—
So vast the throng—to count the tale.
But when no God or Titan wooed
A wife from all that multitude,
Refused by all, they gave their love
In common to the Gods above.
Then from the sea still vext and wild
Rose Surá,[3] Varun's maiden child.
A fitting match she sought to find;
But Diti's sons her love declined.

---

[1] Dhanvantari, the physican of the Gods.

[2] The poet plays upon the word and fancifully derives it from *apsu* the locative case plural of *ap*, water, and *rasa* taste.......The word is probably derived from *ap*, water and *sri*, to go, and seems to signify *inhabitants of the water*, nymphs of the stream; or, as Goldstücker thinks (Dict. s. v.) these divinities were originally personifications of the vapours which are attracted by the sun and form into mist or clouds.

[3] '*Surá*, in the feminine comprehends all sorts of intoxicating liquors, many kinds of which the Indians from the earliest times distilled and prepared from rice, sugar-cane, the palm tree, and various flowers and plants. Nothing is considered more disgraceful among orthodox Hindus than drunkenness, and the use of wine is forbidden not only to Bráhmans but the two other orders as well...So it clearly appears derogatory to the dignity of the Gods to have received a nymph so pernicious, who ought rather to have been made over to the Titans. However the etymological fancy has prevailed. The word *Sura*, a God, is derived from the indeclinable *Swar* heaven.' SCHLEGEL.

Their kinsmen of the rival brood
To the pure maid in honour sued.
Hence those who loved that nymph so fair
The hallowed name of Suras bear.
And Asurs are the Titan crowd
Her gentle claims who disallowed.
Then from the foamy sea was freed
Uchchaihśravas,[1] the generous steed,
And Kaustubha, of gems the gem,[2]
And Soma, Moon-God, after them.
At length when many a year had fled,
Up floated, on her lotus bed,
A maiden fair and tender-eyed,
In the young flush of beauty's pride.
She shone with pearl and golden sheen,
And seals of glory stamped her queen.
On each round arm glowed many a gem,
On her smooth brows, a diadem.
Rolling in waves beneath her crown
The glory of her hair flowed down.
Pearls on her neck of price untold,
The lady shone like burnisht gold.
Queen of the Gods, she leapt to land,
A lotus in her perfect hand,
And fondly, of the lotus sprung,
To lotus-bearing Vishṇu clung.
Her, Gods above and men below
As Beauty's Queen and Fortune know.[3]

---

[1] Literally, high-eared, the horse of Indra. Compare the production of the horse from the sea by Neptune.

[2] 'And Kaustubha the best
Of gems that burns with living light
Upon Lord Vishṇu's breast.'

Churning of the Ocean.

[3] 'That this story of the birth of Lakshmí is of considerable antiquity is evident from one of her names *Kshirábdhi-tanayá*, daughter of the

Gods, Titans, and the minstrel train
Still churned and wrought the troubled main.
At length the prize so madly sought,
The Amrit, to their sight was brought.
For the rich spoil, 'twixt these and those
A fratricidal war arose,
And, host 'gainst host in battle set,
Aditi's sons and Diti's met.
United, with the giants' aid,
Their fierce attack the Titans made,
And wildly raged for many a day
That universe-astounding fray.
When wearied arms were faint to strike,
And ruin threatened all alike,
Vishṇu, with art's illusive aid,
The Amrit from their sight conveyed.
That Best of Beings smote his foes
Who dared his deathless arm oppose :
Yea, Vishṇu, all-pervading God,
Beneath his feet the Titans trod.
Aditi's race, the sons of light,
Slew Diti's brood in cruel fight.
Then town-destroying[1] Indra gained
His empire, and in glory reigned
O'er the three worlds, with bard and sage
Rejoicing in his heritage.

Milky Sea, which is found in *Amarasinha* the most ancient of Indian lexicographers. The similarity to the Greek myth of Venus being born from the foam of the sea is remarkable.'

'In this description of Lakshmí one thing only offends me, that she is said to have four arms. Each of Vishṇu's arms, single as far as the elbow, there branches into two; but Lakshmí in all the brass seals that I possess or remember to have seen has two arms only. Nor does this deformity of redundant limbs suit the pattern of perfect beauty.' SCHLEGEL. I have omitted the offensive epithet.

[1] Purandara, a common title of Indra.

CANTO XLVI.

DITI'S HOPE.

But Diti, when her sons were slain,
Wild with a childless mother's pain,
To Kaśyap spake, Marícha's son,
Her husband: 'O thou glorious one!
Dead are the children, mine no more,
The mighty sons to thee I bore.
Long fervour's meed, I crave a boy
Whose arm may Indra's life destroy.
The toil and pain my care shall be:
To bless my hope depends on thee.
Give me a mighty son to slay
Fierce Indra, gracious lord! I pray.'

Then glorious Kaśyap thus replied
To Diti, as she wept and sighed:
'Thy prayer is heard, dear saint! Remain
Pure from all spot, and thou shalt gain
A son whose arm shall take the life
Of Indra in the battle strife.
For full a thousand years endure
Free from all stain, supremely pure;
Then shall thy son and mine appear,
Whom the three worlds shall serve with fear.'
These words the glorious Kaśyap said,
Then gently stroked his consort's head,
Blessed her, and bade a kind adieu,
And turned him to his rites anew.
Soon as her lord had left her side,
Her bosom swelled with joy and pride.

She sought the shade of holy boughs,
And there began her awful vows.
While yet she wrought her rites austere,
Indra, unbidden, hastened near,
With sweet observance tending her,
A reverential minister.
Wood, water, fire, and grass he brought,
Sweet roots and woodland fruit he sought,
And all her wants, the Thousand-eyed,
With never-failing care, supplied,
With tender love and soft caress
Removing pain and weariness.
When, of the thousand years ordained,
Ten only unfulfilled remained,
Thus to her son, the Thousand-eyed,
The Goddess in her triumph cried:
'Best of the mighty! there remain
But ten short years of toil and pain;
These years of penance soon will flee,
And a new brother thou shalt see.
Him for thy sake I 'll nobly breed,
And lust of war his soul shall feed;
Then free from care and sorrow thou
Shalt see the worlds before him bow.'[1]

---

[1] A few verses which I have been obliged to leave untranslated here will be found in the Appendix 'veiled in the obscurity of a learned language.'

CANTO XLVII.

SUMATI.

Thus to Lord Indra, Thousand-eyed,
Softly beseeching Diti sighed,
When but a blighted bud was left,
Which Indra's hand in seven had cleft:[1]
'No fault, O Lord of Gods, is thine;
The blame herein is only mine.
But for one grace I fain would pray,
As thou hast reft this hope away.
This bud, O Indra, which a blight
Has withered ere it saw the light—
From this may seven fair spirits rise
To rule the regions of the skies.
Be theirs through heaven's unbounded space
On shoulders of the winds to race,
My children, drest in heavenly forms,
Far-famed as Máruts, Gods of storms.
One God to Brahmá's sphere assign,
Let one, O Indra, watch o'er thine;
And ranging through the lower air,
The third the name of Váyu[2] bear.

---

[1] 'In this myth of Indra destroying the unborn fruit of Diti with his thunder-bolt, from which afterwards came the Máruts or Gods of Wind and Storm, geological phenomena are, it seems, represented under mythical images. In the great Mother of the Gods is, perhaps, figured the dry earth: Indra the God of thunder rends it open, and there issue from its rent bosom the Máruts or exhalations of the earth. But such ancient myths are difficult to interpret with absolute certainty.' GORRESIO.

[2] Wind.

Gods let the four remaining be,
And roam through space, obeying thee.'
The Town-destroyer, Thousand-eyed,
Who smote fierce Bali till he died,
Joined suppliant hands, and thus replied:
'Thy children heavenly forms shall wear;
The names devised by thee shall bear,
And, Maruts called by my decree,
Shall Amrit drink and wait on me.
From fear and age and sickness freed,
Through the three worlds their wings shall speed.'

Thus in the hermits' holy shade
Mother and son their compact made,
And then, as fame relates, content,
Home to the happy skies they went.
This is the spot—so men have told—
Where Lord Mahendra[1] dwelt of old,
This is the blessed region where
His votaress mother claimed his care.
Here gentle Alambúshá bare
To old Ikshváku, king and sage,
Viśála, glory of his age,
By whom, a monarch void of guilt,
Was this fair town Viśálá built.
His son was Hemachandra, still
Renowned for might and warlike skill.
From him the great Suchandra came;
His son, Dhúmráśva, dear to fame.
Next followed royal Srinjay; then
Famèd Sahadeva, lord of men.
Next came Kuśáśva, good and mild,
Whose son was Somadatta styled,
And Sumati, his heir, the peer

[1] Indra, with *mahá*, great, prefixed.

Of Gods above, now governs here.
And ever through Ikshváku's grace,
Viśálá's kings, his noble race,
Are lofty-souled, and blest with length
Of days, with virtue, and with strength.
This night, O Prince, we here will sleep;
And when the day begins to peep,
Our onward way will take with thee,
The king of Mithilá to see.'

Then Sumati, the king, aware
Of Viśvámitra's advent there,
Came quickly forth with honour meet
The lofty-minded sage to greet.
Girt with his priest and lords the king
Did low obeisance, worshipping.
With suppliant hands, with head inclined,
Thus spoke he after question kind:
'Since thou hast deigned to bless my sight,
And grace awhile thy servant's seat,
High fate is mine, great Anchorite,
And none may with my bliss compete.'

CANTO XLVIII.

INDRA AND AHALYÁ.

When mutual courtesies had past,
Viśálá's ruler spoke at last:
'These princely youths, O Sage, who vie
In might with children of the sky,
Heroic, born for happy fate,
With elephants' or lions' gait,
Bold as the tiger or the bull,
With lotus eyes so large and full,
Armed with the quiver, sword, and bow,
Whose figures like the Aśvins[1] show,
Like children of the deathless Powers,
Come freely to these shades of ours,[2]—
How have they reached on foot this place?
What do they seek, and what their race?
As sun and moon adorn the sky,
This spot the heroes glorify.
Alike in stature, port, and mien,
The same fair form in each is seen.'

He spoke; and at the monarch's call
The best of hermits told him all,
How in the grove with him they dwelt,
And slaughter to the demons dealt.
Then wonder filled the monarch's breast,
Who tended well each royal guest.
Thus entertained, the princely pair

---

[1] The Heavenly Twins.

[2] Not banished from heaven as the inferior Gods and demigods sometimes were.

Remained that night and rested there,
And with the morn's returning ray
To Mithilá pursued their way.

When Janak's lovely city first
Upon their sight, yet distant, burst,
The hermits all with joyful cries
Hailed the fair town that met their eyes.
Then Ráma saw a holy wood,
Close, in the city's neighbourhood,
O'ergrown, deserted, marked by age,
And thus addressed the mighty sage:
'O reverend lord, I long to know
What hermit dwelt here long ago.'
Then to the prince his holy guide,
Most eloquent of men, replied:
'O Ráma, listen while I tell
Whose was this grove, and what befell
When in the fury of his rage
The high saint cursed the hermitage.
This was the grove—most lovely then—
Of Gautam, O thou best of men,
Like heaven itself, most honoured by
The Gods who dwell above the sky.
Here with Ahalyá at his side
His fervid task the ascetic plied.
Years fled in thousands. On a day
It chanced the saint had gone away,
When Town-destroying Indra came,
And saw the beauty of the dame.
The sage's form the God endued,
And thus the fair Ahalyá wooed:
'Love, sweet! should brook no dull delay,
But snatch the moments when he may.'
She knew him in the saint's disguise,

Lord Indra of the Thousand eyes,
But touched by love's unholy fire,
She yielded to the God's desire.

'Now, Lord of Gods!' she whispered, 'flee,
From Gautam save thyself and me.'
Trembling with doubt and wild with dread
Lord Indra from the cottage fled;
But fleeing in the grove he met
The home-returning anchoret,
Whose wrath the Gods and fiends would shun,
Such power his fervent rites had won.
Fresh from the lustral flood he came,
In splendour like the burning flame,
With fuel for his sacred rites,
And grass, the best of eremites.
The Lord of Gods was sad of cheer
To see the mighty saint so near,
And when the holy hermit spied
In hermit's garb the Thousand-eyed,
He knew the whole, his fury broke
Forth on the sinner as he spoke:
'Because my form thou hast assumed,
And wrought this folly, thou art doomed.
For this my curse to thee shall cling,
Henceforth a sad and sexless thing.'
No empty threat that sentence came,
It chilled his soul and marred his frame,
His might and godlike vigour fled,
And every nerve was cold and dead.
Then on his wife his fury burst,
And thus the guilty dame he cursed:
'For countless years, disloyal spouse,
Devoted to severest vows,
Thy bed the ashes, air thy food,

Here shalt thou live in solitude.
This lonely grove thy home shall be,
And not an eye thy form shall see.
When Ráma, Daśaratha's child,
Shall seek these shades then drear and wild,
His coming shall remove thy stain,
And make the sinner pure again.
Due honour paid to him, thy guest,
Shall cleanse thy fond and erring breast,
Thee to my side in bliss restore,
And give thy proper shape once more.'[1]

Thus to his guilty wife he said.
Then far the holy Gautam fled,
And on Himálaya's lovely heights
Spent the long years in sternest rites.'

[1] 'Kumárila says: 'In the same manner, if it is said that Indra was the seducer of Ahalyá, this does not imply that the God Indra committed such a crime, but Indra means the sun, and Ahalyá (from ahan and lí) the night; and as the night is seduced and ruined by the sun of the morning, therefore is Indra called the paramour of Ahalyá.' MAX MÜLLER, *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 530.

CANTO XLIX.

AHALYÁ FREED.

Then Ráma, following still his guide,
Within the grove, with Lakshmaṇ, hied.
Her vows a wondrous light had lent
To that illustrious penitent.
He saw the glorious lady, screened
From eye of man, and God, and fiend,
Like some bright portent which the care
Of Brahmá launches through the air,
Designed by his illusive art
To flash a moment and depart:
Or like the flame that leaps on high
To sink involved in smoke and die:
Or like the full moon shining through
The wintry mist, then lost to view:
Or like the sun's reflection, cast
Upon the flood, too bright to last:
So was the glorious dame till then
Removed from Gods' and mortals' ken,
Till—such was Gautam's high decree—
Prince Ráma came to set her free.
  Then, with great joy that dame to meet,
The sons of Raghu clasped her feet;
And she, remembering Gautam's oath,
With gentle grace received them both;
Then water for their feet she gave,
Guest-gift, and all that strangers crave.
  The prince, of courteous rule aware,
Received, as meet, the lady's care.

Then flowers came down in copious rain,
And moving to the heavenly strain
Of music in the skies that rang,
The nymphs and minstrels danced and sang;
And all the Gods with one glad voice
Praised the great dame, and cried, 'Rejoice!
Through fervid rites no more defiled,
But with thy husband reconciled.'
Gautam, the holy hermit knew—
For naught escaped his godlike view—
That Ráma lodged beneath that shade,
And hasting there his homage paid.
He took Ahalyá to his side,
From sin and folly purified,
And let his new-found consort bear
In his austerities a share.

Then Ráma, pride of Raghu's race,
Welcomed by Gautam, face to face,
Who every highest honour showed,
To Mithilá pursued his road.

CANTO L.

JANAK.

The sons of Raghu journeyed forth,
Bending their steps 'twixt east and north.
Soon, guided by the sage, they found,
Enclosed, a sacrificial ground.
Then to the best of saints, his guide,
In admiration Ráma cried:
'The high-souled king no toil has spared,
But nobly for his rite prepared.
How many thousand Bráhmans here,
From every region, far and near,
Well read in holy lore, appear!
How many tents, that sages screen,
With wains in hundreds, here are seen!
Great Bráhman, let us find a place
Where we may stay and rest a space.'
The hermit did as Ráma prayed,
And in a spot his lodging made,
Far from the crowd, sequestered, clear,
With copious water flowing near.
Then Janak, best of kings, aware
Of Viśvámitra lodging there,
With Śatánanda for his guide—
The priest on whom he most relied,
His chaplain void of guile and stain—
And others of his priestly train,
Bearing the gift that greets the guest,
To meet him with all honour pressed.
The saint received with gladsome mind

Each honour and observance kind:
Then of his health he asked the king,
And how his rites were prospering.
Janak, with chaplain and with priest,
Addressed the hermits, chief and least,
Accosting all, in due degree,
With proper words of courtesy.
Then, with his palms together laid,
The king his supplication made:
'Deign, reverend lord, to sit thee down
With these good saints of high renown.'
Then sate the chief of hermits there,
Obedient to the monarch's prayer.
Chaplain and priest, and king and peer,
Sate in their order, far or near.
Then thus the king began to say:
'The Gods have blest my rite to-day,
And with the sight of thee repaid
The preparations I have made.
Grateful am I, so highly blest,
That thou, of saints the holiest,
Hast come, O Bráhman, here with all
These hermits to the festival.
Twelve days, O Bráhman Sage, remain—
For so the learned priests ordain—
And then, O heir of Kuśik's name,
The Gods will come their dues to claim.'

With looks that testified delight
Thus spake he to the anchorite,
Then with his suppliant hands upraised,
He asked, as earnestly he gazed:
'These princely youths, O Sage, who vie
In might with children of the sky,
Heroic, born for happy fate,

With elephants' or lions' gait,
Bold as the tiger and the bull,
With lotus eyes so large and full,
Armed with the quiver, sword and bow,
Whose figures like the Aśvins show,
Like children of the heavenly Powers,
Come freely to these shades of ours,—
How have they reached on foot this place?
What do they seek, and what their race?
As sun and moon adorn the sky,
This spot the heroes glorify;
Alike in stature, port, and mien,
The same fair form in each is seen.'[1]

Thus spoke the monarch, lofty-souled:
The saint, of heart unfathomed, told
How, sons of Daśaratha, they
Accompanied his homeward way,
How in the hermitage they dwelt,
And slaughter to the demons dealt:
Their journey till the spot they neared
Whence fair Viśálá's towers appeared:
Ahalyá seen and freed from taint;
Their meeting with her lord the saint;
And how they thither came, to know
The virtue of the famous bow.

Thus Viśvámitra spoke the whole
To royal Janak, great of soul,
And when this wondrous tale was o'er,
The glorious hermit said no more.

---

[1] 'The preceding sixteen lines have occurred before in CANTO XLVIII. This Homeric custom of repeating a passage of several lines is strange to our poet. This is the only instance I remember. The repetition of single lines is common enough.' SCHLEGEL.

CANTO LI.

VIŚVÁMITRA.

Wise Viśvámitra's tale was done:
Then sainted Gautam's eldest son,
Great Śatánanda, far-renowned,
Whom long austerities had crowned
With glory,—as the news he heard
The down upon his body stirred,—
Filled full of wonder at the sight
Of Ráma, felt supreme delight.
When Śatánanda saw the pair
Of youthful princes seated there,
He turned him to the holy man
Who sate at ease, and thus began:
'And didst thou, mighty Sage, in truth
Show clearly to this royal youth
My mother, glorious far and wide,
Whom penance-rites have sanctified?
And did my glorious mother—she,
Heiress of noble destiny—
Serve her great guest with woodland store,
Whom all should honour evermore?
Didst thou the tale to Ráma tell
Of what in ancient days befell,
The sin, the misery, and the shame
Of guilty God and faithless dame?
And, O thou best of hermits, say,
Did Ráma's healing presence stay
Her trial? was the wife restored
Again to him, my sire and lord?

Say, Hermit, did that sire of mine
Receive her with a soul benign,
When long austerities in time
Had cleansed her from the taint of crime?
And, son of Kuśik, let me know,
Did my great-minded father show
Honour to Ráma, and regard,
Before he journeyed hitherward?'
The hermit with attentive ear
Marked all the questions of the seer:
To him for eloquence far-famed,
His eloquent reply he framed:
'Yea, 'twas my care no task to shun,
And all I had to do was done;
As Reṇuká and Bhrigu's child,
The saint and dame were reconciled.'

When the great sage had thus replied.
To Ráma Śatánanda cried:
'A welcome visit, Prince, is thine,
Thou scion of King Raghu's line,
With him to guide thy way aright,
This sage invincible in might.
This Bráhman sage, most glorious-bright,
By long austerities has wrought
A wondrous deed, exceeding thought:
Thou knowest well, O strong of arm,
This sure defence from scathe and harm.
None, Ráma, none is living now
In all the earth more blest than thou,
That thou hast won a saint so tried
In fervid rites thy life to guide.
Now listen, Prince, while I relate
His lofty deeds and wondrous fate.
He was a monarch pious-souled,

His foemen in the dust he rolled;
Most learned, prompt at duty's claim,
His people's good his joy and aim.

Of old the Lord of Life gave birth
To mighty Kuśa, king of earth.
His son was Kuśanábha, strong,
Friend of the right, the foe of wrong.
Gádhi, whose fame no time shall dim,
Heir of his throne, was born to him,
And Viśvámitra, Gádhi's heir,
Governed the land with kingly care.
While years unnumbered rolled away
The monarch reigned with equal sway.
At length, assembling many a band,
He led his warriors round the land—
Complete in tale, a mighty force,
Cars, elephants, and foot, and horse.
Through cities, groves, and floods he passed,
O'er lofty hills, through regions vast.
He reached Vaśishṭha's pure abode,
Where trees, and flowers, and creepers glowed,
Where troops of sylvan creatures fed;
Which saints and angels visited.
Gods, fauns, and bards of heavenly race,
And spirits, glorified the place;
The deer their timid ways forgot,
And holy Bráhmans thronged the spot.
Bright in their souls, like fire, were these,
Made pure by long austerities,
Bound by the rule of vows severe,
And each in glory Brahmá's peer.
Some fed on water, some on air,
Some on the leaves that withered there.
Roots and wild fruit were others' food;

All rage was checked, each sense subdued.
There Bálakhilyas[1] went and came,
Now breathed the prayer, now fed the flame:
These, and ascetic bands beside,
The sweet retirement beautified.
Such was Vaśishṭha's blest retreat,
Like Brahmá's own celestial seat,
Which gladdened Viśvámitra's eyes,
Peerless for warlike enterprise.

---

[1] Divine personages of minute size produced from the hair of Brahmá, and probably the origin of

'That small infantry
Warred on by cranes.'

CANTO LII.

VAŚISHṬHA'S FEAST.

Right glad was Viśvámitra when
He saw the prince of saintly men.
Low at his feet the hero bent,
And did obeisance, reverent.
  The king was welcomed in, and shown
A seat beside the hermit's own,
Who offered him, when resting there,
Fruit in due course, and woodland fare.
And Viśvámitra, noblest king,
Received Vaśishṭha's welcoming,
Turned to his host, and prayed him tell
That he and all with him were well.
Vaśishṭha to the king replied
That all was well on every side,
That fire, and vows, and pupils throve,
And all the trees within the grove.
And then the son of Brahmá, best
Of all who pray with voice suppressed,
Questioned with pleasant words like these
The mighty king who sate at ease:
'And is it well with thee? I pray;
And dost thou win by virtuous sway
Thy people's love, discharging all
The duties on a king that fall?
Are all thy servants fostered well?
Do all obey, and none rebel?
Hast thou, destroyer of the foe,
No enemies to overthrow?

Does fortune, conqueror! still attend
Thy treasure, host, and every friend?
Is it all well? Does happy fate
On sons and children's children wait?'
He spoke. The modest king replied
That all was prosperous far and wide.
Thus for awhile the two conversed,
As each to each his tale rehearsed,
And as the happy moments flew,
Their joy and friendship stronger grew.
When such discourse had reached an end,
Thus spoke the saint most reverend
To royal Viśvámitra, while
His features brightened with a smile:
'O mighty lord of men, I fain
Would banquet thee and all thy train
In mode that suits thy station high:
And do not thou my prayer deny.
Let my good lord with favour take
The offering that I fain would make,
And let me honour, ere we part,
My royal guest with loving heart.'

Him Viśvámitra thus addressed:
'Why make, O Saint, this new request?
Thy welcome and each gracious word
Sufficient honour have conferred.
Thou gavest roots and fruit to eat,
The treasures of this pure retreat,
And water for my mouth and feet;
And—boon I prize above the rest—
Thy presence has mine eyesight blest.
Honoured by thee in every way,
To whom all honour all should pay,

I now will go. My lord, Good-bye!
Regard me with a friendly eye.'

Him speaking thus Vaśishṭha stayed,
And still to share his banquet prayed.
The will of Gádhi's son he bent,
And won the monarch to consent,
Who spoke in answer, 'Let it be,
Great Hermit, as it pleases thee.'
When, best of those who breathe the prayer,
He heard the king his will declare,
He called the cow of spotted skin,
All spot without, all pure within.
'Come, Dapple-skin,' he cried, 'with speed;
Hear thou my words and help at need.
My heart is set to entertain
This monarch and his mighty train
With sumptuous meal and worthy fare;
Be thine the banquet to prepare.
Each dainty cate, each goodly dish,
Of six-fold taste[1] as each may wish—
All these, O cow of heavenly power,
Rain down for me in copious shower:
Viands and drink for tooth and lip,
To eat, to suck, to quaff, to sip—
Of these sufficient, and to spare,
O plenty-giving cow, prepare.'

[1] Sweet, salt, pungent, bitter, acid, and astringent.

CANTO LIII.

VIŚVÁMITRA'S REQUEST.

Thus charged, O slayer of thy foes,
The cow from whom all plenty flows,
Obedient to her saintly lord,
Viands to suit each taste, outpoured.
Honey she gave, and roasted grain,
Mead sweet with flowers, and sugar-cane.
Each beverage of flavour rare,
And food of every sort, were there:
Hills of hot rice, and sweetened cakes,
And curdled milk and soup in lakes.
Vast beakers foaming to the brim
With sugared drink prepared for him,
And dainty sweetmeats, deftly made,
Before the hermit's guests were laid.
So well regaled, so nobly fed,
The mighty army banqueted,
And all the train, from chief to least,
Delighted in Vaśishṭha's feast.
Then Viśvámitra, royal sage,
Surrounded by his vassalage,
Prince, peer, and counsellor, and all
From highest lord to lowest thrall,
Thus feasted, to Vaśishṭha cried
With joy, supremely gratified:
'Rich honour I, thus entertained,
Most honourable lord, have gained:
Now hear, before I journey hence,
My words, O skilled in eloquence.

Bought for a hundred thousand kine,
Let Dapple-skin, O Saint, be mine.
A wondrous jewel is thy cow,
And gems are for the monarch's brow.[1]
To me her rightful lord resign
This Dapple-skin thou callest thine.'

The great Vaśishṭha, thus addressed,
Arch-hermit of the holy breast,
To Viśvámitra answer made,
The king whom all the land obeyed:
'Not for a hundred thousand,—nay,
Not if ten million thou wouldst pay,
With silver heaps the price to swell,—
Will I my cow, O Monarch, sell.
Unmeet for her is such a fate,
That I my friend should alienate.
As glory with the virtuous, she
For ever makes her home with me.
On her mine offerings which ascend
To Gods and spirits all depend:
My very life is due to her,
My guardian, friend, and minister.
The feeding of the sacred flame,[2]
The dole which living creatures claim,[3]
The mighty sacrifice by fire,
Each formula the rites require,[4]

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[1] 'Of old hoards and minerals in the earth, the king is entitled to half by reason of his general protection, and because he is the lord paramount of the soil.'

MANU, Book VIII. 39.

[2] Ghí or clarified butter, 'holy oil,' being one of the essentials of sacrifice.

[3] 'A Bráhman had five principal duties to discharge every day: study and teaching the Veda, oblations to the manes or spirits of the departed, sacrifice to the Gods, hospitable offerings to men, and a *gift of*

And various saving lore beside,
Are by her aid, in sooth, supplied.
The banquet which thy host has shared,
Believe it, was by her prepared.
In her mine only treasures lie,
She cheers mine heart and charms mine eye.
And reasons more could I assign
Why Dapple-skin can ne'er be thine.'

The royal sage, his suit denied,
With eloquence more earnest cried:
'Tusked elephants, a goodly train,
Each with a golden girth and chain,
Whose goads with gold well fashioned shine—
Of these be twice seven thousand thine.
And four-horse cars with gold made bright,
With steeds most beautifully white,
Whose bells make music as they go,
Eight hundred, Saint, will I bestow.
Eleven thousand mettled steeds
From famous lands, of noble breeds—
These will I gladly give, O thou
Devoted to each holy vow.
Ten million heifers, fair to view,
Whose sides are marked with every hue—
These in exchange will I assign;
But let thy Dapple-skin be mine.
Ask what thou wilt, and piles untold
Of priceless gems and gleaming gold,
O best of Bráhmans, shall be thine;
But let thy Dapple-skin be mine.'

---

food to all creatures. The last consisted of rice or other grain which the Bráhman was to offer every day outside his house in the open air. MANU, Book III. 70.' GORRESIO.

* These were certain sacred words of invocation such as *sváhá, vashat*, etc. pronounced at the time of sacrifice.

The great Vaśishṭha, thus addressed,
Made answer to the king's request:
'Ne'er will I give my cow away,
My gem, my wealth, my life and stay.
My worship at the moon's first show,
And at the full, to her I owe;
And sacrifices small and great,
Which largess due and gifts await.
From her alone, their root, O King,
My rites and holy service spring.
What boots it further words to say?
I will not give my cow away
Who yields me what I ask each day.'

CANTO LIV.

THE BATTLE.

As Saint Vaśishṭha answered so,
Nor let the cow of plenty go,
The monarch, as a last resource,
Began to drag her off by force.
While the king's servants tore away
Their moaning, miserable prey,
Sad, sick at heart, and sore distressed,
She pondered thus within her breast:
'Why am I thus forsaken? why
Betrayed by him of soul most high,
Vaśishṭha, ravished by the hands
Of soldiers of the monarch's bands?
Ah me! what evil have I done
Against the lofty-minded one,
That he, so pious, can expose
The innocent whose love he knows?'
In her sad breast as thus she thought,
And heaved deep sighs with anguish fraught,
With wondrous speed away she fled,
And back to Saint Vaśishṭha sped.
She hurled by hundreds to the ground
The menial crew that hemmed her round,
And flying swifter than the blast
Before the saint herself she cast.
There Dapple-skin before the saint
Stood moaning forth her sad complaint,
And wept and lowed: such tones as come
From wandering cloud or distant drum.

'O son of Brahmá,' thus cried she,
'Why hast thou thus forsaken me,
That the king's men, before thy face,
Bear off thy servant from her place?'
Then thus the Bráhman saint replied
To her whose heart with woe was tried,
And grieving for his favourite's sake,
As to a suffering sister spake:
'I leave thee not: dismiss the thought;
Nor, duteous, hast thou failed in aught.
This king, o'erweening in the pride
Of power, has reft thee from my side.
Little, I ween, my strength could do
'Gainst him, a mighty warrior too.
Strong, as a soldier born and bred,—
Great, as a king whom regions dread.
See! what a host the conqueror leads,
With elephants, and cars, and steeds.
O'er countless bands his pennons fly:
So is he mightier far than I.'

He spoke. Then she, in lowly mood,
To that high saint her speech renewed:
'So judge not they who wisest are:
The Bráhman's might is mightier far.
For Bráhmans strength from Heaven derive,
And warriors bow when Bráhmans strive.
A boundless power 'tis thine to wield:
To such a king thou shouldst not yield,
Who, very mighty though he be,—
So fierce thy strength,—must bow to thee.
Command me, Saint. Thy power divine
Has brought me here and made me thine;
And I, howe'er the tyrant boast,
Will tame his pride and slay his host.'

Then cried the glorious sage: 'Create
A mighty force the foe to mate.'
She lowed, and quickened into life,
Pahlavas,[1] burning for the strife,
King Viśvámitra's army slew
Before the very leader's view.
The monarch in excessive ire,
His eyes with fury darting fire,
Rained every missile on the foe
Till all the Pahlavas were low.
She, seeing all her champions slain,
Lying by thousands on the plain,
Created, by her mere desire,
Yavans and Śakas, fierce and dire.
And all the ground was overspread
With Yavans and with Śakas dread:
A host of warriors bright and strong,
And numberless in closest throng:
The threads within the lotus stem,
So densely packed, might equal them.
In gold-hued mail 'gainst war's attacks,
Each bore a sword and battle-axe.
The royal host, where'er these came,
Fell as if burnt with ravening flame.

---

[1] 'It is well known that the Persians were called Pahlavas by the Indians. The *Śakas* are nomad tribes inhabiting central Asia, the Scythes of the Greeks, whom the Persians also, as Herodotus tells us, called Sakæ just as the Indians did. Lib. VII. 64. *οἱ γὰρ Πέρσαι πάντας τοὺς Σκύθας καλέουσι Σάκας.* The name Yavans seems to be used rather indefinitely for nations situated beyond Persia to the west........ After the time of Alexander the Great the Indians as well as the Persians called the Greeks also Yavans.' SCHLEGEL.

Lassen thinks that the Pahlavas were the same people as the Πάκτυες of Herodotus, and that this non-Indian people dwelt on the north-west confines of India.

The monarch, famous through the world,
Again his fearful weapons hurled,
That made Kámbojas,[1] Barbars,[2] all,
With Yavans, troubled, flee and fall.

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[1] See page 42, note 1.

[2] Barbarians, non-Sanskrit-speaking tribes.

CANTO LV.

THE HERMITAGE BURNT.

So o'er the field that host lay strown,
By Viśvámitra's darts o'erthrown.
Then thus Vaśishṭha charged the cow:
'Create with all thy vigour now.'
Forth sprang Kámbojas, as she lowed;
Bright as the sun their faces glowed.
Forth from her udder Barbars poured,—
Soldiers who brandished spear and sword,—
And Yavans with their shafts and darts,
And Śakas from her hinder parts.
And every pore upon her fell,
And every hair-producing cell,
With Mlechchhas[1] and Kirátas[2] teemed,
And forth with them Háritas streamed.
And Viśvámitra's mighty force,
Car, elephant, and foot, and horse,
Fell in a moment's time, subdued
By that tremendous multitude.
The monarch's hundred sons, whose eyes

---

[1] A comprehensive term for foreign or outcast races of different faith and language from the Hindus.

[2] The Kirátas and Háritas are savage aborigines of India who occupy hills and jungles and are altogether different in race and character from the Hindus. Dr. Muir remarks in his Sanskrit Texts, Vol. I. p. 488, (second edition) that it does not appear that it is the object of this legend to represent this miraculous creation as the origin of these tribes, and that nothing more may have been intended than that the cow called into existence large armies, of the same stock with particular tribes previously existing.

Beheld the rout in wild suprise,
Armed with all weapons, mad with rage,
Rushed fiercely on the holy sage.
One cry he raised, one glance he shot,
And all fell scorched upon the spot:
Burnt by the sage to ashes, they
With horse, and foot, and chariot, lay.
The monarch mourned, with shame and pain,
His army lost, his children slain,
Like Ocean when his roar is hushed,
Or some great snake whose fangs are crushed:
Or as in swift eclipse the Sun
Dark with the doom he cannot shun:
Or a poor bird with mangled wing—
So, reft of sons and host, the king.
No longer, by ambition fired,
The pride of war his breast inspired.
He gave his empire to his son—
Of all he had, the only one:
And bade him rule as kings are taught.
Then straight a hermit-grove he sought.
Far to Himálaya's side he fled,
Which bards and Nágas visited,
And, Mahádeva's[1] grace to earn,
He gave his life to penance stern.
A lengthened season thus passed by,
When Śiva's self, the Lord most High,
Whose banner shows the pictured bull,[2]
Appeared, the God most bountiful:

'Why fervent thus in toil and pain?
What brings thee here? what boon to gain?

---

[1] The Great God, Śive.

[2] Nandi, the snow-white bull, the attendant and favourite vehicle of Śiva.

Thy heart's desire, O Monarch, speak :
I grant the boons which mortals seek.'
The king, his adoration paid,
To Mahádeva answer made :
'If thou hast deemed me fit to win
Thy favour, O thou void of sin,
On me, O mighty God, bestow
The wondrous science of the bow,
All mine, complete in every part,
With secret spell and mystic art.
To me be all the arms revealed
That Gods, and saints, and Titans wield,
And every dart that arms the hands
Of spirits, fiends and minstrel bands.
Be mine, O Lord supreme in place,
This token of thy boundless grace.'

The Lord of Gods then gave consent,
And to his heavenly mansion went.
Triumphant in the arms he held,
The monarch's breast with glory swelled.
So swells the ocean, when upon
His breast the full moon's beams have shone.
Already in his mind he viewed
Vaśishṭha at his feet subdued.
He sought that hermit's grove, and there
Launched his dire weapons through the air,
Till scorched by might that none could stay
The hermitage in ashes lay.
Where'er the inmates saw, aghast,
The dart that Viśvámitra cast,
To every side they turned and fled
In hundreds forth disquieted.
Vaśishṭha's pupils caught the fear,
And every bird and every deer,

And fled in wild confusion forth
Eastward and westward, south and north.
And so Vaśishṭha's holy shade
A solitary wild was made,
Silent awhile, for not a sound
Disturbed the hush that was around.
  Vaśishṭha then, with eager cry,
Called, 'Fear not, friends, nor seek to fly.
This son of Gádhi dies to-day,
Like hoar-frost in the morning's ray.'
Thus having said, the glorious sage
Spoke to the king in words of rage:
'Because thou hast destroyed this grove
Which long in holy quiet throve,
By folly urged to senseless crime,
Now shalt thou die before thy time.'

CANTO LVI.

VIŚVÁMITRA'S VOW.

But Viśvámitra, at the threat
Of that illustrious anchoret,
Cried, as he launched with ready hand
A fiery weapon, 'Stand, O stand!'
Vaśishṭha, wild with rage and hate,
Raising, as 'twere the Rod of Fate,
His mighty Bráhman wand on high,
To Viśvámitra made reply:
'Nay, stand, O Warrior thou, and show
What soldier can, 'gainst Bráhman foe.
O Gádhi's son, thy days are told;
Thy pride is tamed, thy dart is cold.
How shall a warrior's puissance dare
With Bráhman's awful strength compare?
To-day, base Warrior, shalt thou feel
That God-sent might is more than steel.'
He raised his Bráhman staff, nor missed
The fiery dart that near him hissed:
And quenched the fearful weapon fell,
As flame beneath the billow's swell.
  Then Gádhi's son in fury threw
Lord Varuṇ's arm and Rudra's too:
Indra's fierce bolt that all destroys;
That which the Lord of Herds employs:
The Human, that which minstrels keep,
The deadly Lure, the endless Sleep:
The Yawner, and the dart which charms;
Lament and Torture, fearful arms:

The Terrible, the dart which dries,
The Thunderbolt which quenchless flies,
And Fate's dread net, and Brahmá's noose,
And that which waits for Varuṇ's use:
The dart he loves who wields the bow
Pináka, and twin bolts that glow
With fury as they flash and fly,
The quenchless Liquid and the Dry:
The dart of Vengeance, swift to kill:
The Goblins' dart, the Curlew's Bill:
The discus both of Fate and Right,
And Vishṇu's, of unerring flight:
The Wind-God's dart, the Troubler dread,
The weapon named the Horse's Head.
From his fierce hand two spears were thrown,
And the great mace that smashes bone:
The dart of spirits of the air,
And that which Fate exults to bear:
The Trident dart which slaughters foes,
And that which hanging skulls compose:
These fearful darts in fiery rain
He hurled upon the saint amain,
An awful miracle to view.
But as the ceaseless tempest flew,
The sage with wand of God-sent power
Still swallowed up that fiery shower.

---

[1] 'The names of many of these weapons which are mythical and partly allegorical have occurred in Canto XXIX. The general signification of the story is clear enough. It is a contest for supremacy between the regal or military order and Bráhmanical or priestly authority, like one of those struggles which our own Europe saw in the middle ages when without employing warlike weapons the priesthood frequently gained the victory.' SCHLEGEL.

For a full account of the early contests between the Bráhmans and the Kshattriyas, see Muir's Original Sanskrit Texts (second edition) Vol. I. Ch. IV.

Then Gádhi's son, when these had failed,
With Brahmá's dart his foe assailed.
The Gods, with Indra at their head,
And Nágas, quailed disquieted,
And saints and minstrels, when they saw
The king that awful weapon draw;
And the three worlds were filled with dread,
And trembled as the missile sped.

The saint, with Bráhman wand, empowered
By lore divine that dart devoured.
Nor could the triple world withdraw
Rapt gazes from that sight of awe:
For as he swallowed down the dart
Of Brahmá, sparks from every part,
From finest pore and hair-cell, broke
Enveloped in a veil of smoke.
The staff he waved was all aglow
Like Yama's sceptre, King below,
Or like the lurid fire of Fate
Whose rage the worlds will desolate.

The hermits, whom that sight had awed,
Extolled the saint with hymn and laud:
'Thy power, O Sage, is ne'er in vain:
Now with thy might thy might restrain.
Be gracious, Master, and allow
The worlds to rest from trouble now;
For Viśvámitra, strong and dread,
By thee has been discomfited.'

Then, thus addressed, the saint, well pleased,
The fury of his wrath appeased.
The king, o'erpowered and ashamed,
With many a deep-drawn sigh exclaimed:
'Ah! Warriors' strength is poor and slight:
A Bráhman's power is truly might.

This Bráhman staff the hermit held
The fury of my darts has quelled.
This truth within my heart impressed,
With senses ruled and tranquil breast
My task austere will I begin,
And Bráhmanhood will strive to win.'

CANTO LVII.

TRIŚANKU.

Then with his heart consumed with woe,
Still brooding on his overthrow
By the great saint he had defied,
At every breath the monarch sighed.
Forth from his home his queen he led,
And to a land far southward fled.
There, fruit and roots his only food,
He practised penance, sense-subdued,
And in that solitary spot
Four virtuous sons the king begot:
Havishyand, from the offering named,
And Madhushyand, for sweetness famed,
Mahárath, chariot-borne in fight,
And Dridhanetra strong of sight.

A thousand years had passed away,
When Brahmá, Sire whom all obey,
Addressed in pleasant words like these
Him rich in long austerities:
'Thou by thy penance, Kuśik's son,
A place 'mid royal saints hast won.
Pleased with thy constant penance, we
This lofty rank assign to thee.'

Thus spoke the glorious Lord most High,
Father of earth and air and sky,
And with the Gods around him spread
Home to his changeless sphere he sped.
But Viśvámitra scorned the grace,
And bent in shame his angry face.

Burning with rage, o'erwhelmed with grief,
Thus in his heart exclaimed the chief:
'No fruit, I ween, have I secured
By strictest penance long endured,
If Gods and all the saints decree
To make but royal saint of me.'
Thus pondering, he with sense subdued,
With sternest zeal his vows renewed.

Then reigned a monarch, true of soul,
Who kept each sense in firm control;
Of old Ikshváku's line he came,
That glories in Triśanku's[1] name.
Within his breast, O Raghu's child,
Arose a longing, strong and wild,
Great offerings to the Gods to pay,
And win, alive, to heaven his way.
His priest Vaśishṭha's aid he sought,
And told him of his secret thought.
But wise Vaśishṭha showed the hope
Was far beyond the monarch's scope.
Triśanku then, his suit denied,
Far to the southern region hied,
To beg Vaśishṭha's sons to aid
The mighty plan his soul had made.
There King Triśanku, far renowned,
Vaśishṭha's hundred children found,
Each on his fervent vows intent,
For mind and fame preëminent.
To these the famous king applied,
Wise children of his holy guide.

---

[1] 'Triśanku, king of Ayodhyá, was seventh in descent from Ikshváku, and Daśaratha holds the thirty-fourth place in the same genealogy. See CANTO LXX. We are thrown back, therefore, to very ancient times, and it occasions some surprise to find Vaśishṭha and Viśvámitra, actors in these occurrences, still alive in Ráma's time.'

Saluting each in order due,
His eyes, for shame, he downward threw,
And, reverent hands together pressed,
The glorious company addressed:
'I as a humble suppliant seek
Succour of you who aid the weak.
A mighty offering I would pay,
But sage Vaśishṭha answered, Nay.
Be yours permission to accord,
And to my rites your help afford.
Sons of my guide, to each of you
With lowly reverence here I sue;
To each, intent on penance-vow,
O Bráhmans, low my head I bow,
And pray you each with ready heart
In my great rite to bear a part,
That in the body I may rise
And dwell with Gods within the skies.
Sons of my guide, none else I see
Can give what he refuses me.
Ikshváku's children still depend
Upon their guide most reverend;
And you, as nearest in degree
To him, my deities shall be!'

CANTO LVIII.

TRIŚANKU CURSED.

Triśanku's speech the hundred heard,
And thus replied, to anger stirred:
'Why, foolish King, by him denied,
Whose truthful lips have never lied,
Dost thou transgress his prudent rule,
And seek, for aid, another school?[1]
Ikshváku's sons have aye relied
Most surely on their holy guide:
Then how dost thou, fond Monarch, dare
Transgress the rule his lips declare?
'Thy wish is vain,' the saint replied,
And bade thee cast the plan aside.
Then how can we, his sons, pretend
In such a rite our aid to lend?
O Monarch, of the childish heart,
Home to thy royal town depart.
That mighty saint, thy priest and guide,

[1] 'It does not appear how Triśanku, in asking the aid of Vaśishṭha's sons after applying in vain to their father, could be charged with resorting to another *śákhá* (School) in the ordinary sense of that word; as it is not conceivable that the sons should have been of another Śákhá from the father, whose cause they espouse with so much warmth. The commentator in the Bombay edition explains the word *Śákhántaram* as Yájanádiná rakshántaram, "one who by sacrificing for thee, etc., will be another protector." Gorresio's Gauḍa text, which may often be used as a commentary on the older one, has the following paraphrase of the words in question, ch. 60, 3. Múlam utsṛijya kasmát tvam śákhásv ichhasi lambitum. "Why, forsaking the root, dost thou desire to hang upon the branches?" MUIR, Sanskrit Texts Vol. I., p. 401.

At noblest rites may well preside:
The worlds for sacrifice combined
A worthier priest could never find.'
Such speech of theirs the monarch heard,
Though rage distorted every word,
And to the hermits made reply;
'You, like your sire, my suit deny.
For other aid I turn from you:
So, rich in penance, Saints, adieu!'

Vaśishṭha's children heard, and guessed
His evil purpose scarce expressed,
And cried, while rage their bosoms burned,
'Be to a vile Chaṇḍála[1] turned!'
This said, with lofty thoughts inspired,
Each to his own retreat retired.

That night Triśanku underwent
Sad change in shape and lineament.
Next morn, an outcast swart of hue,
His dusky cloth he round him drew.
His hair had fallen from his head,
And roughness o'er his skin was spread.
Such wreaths adorned him as are found
To flourish on the funeral ground.
Each armlet was an iron ring:
Such was the figure of the king,
That every counsellor and peer,
And following townsman, fled in fear.
Alone, unyielding to dismay,
Though burnt by anguish night and day,

---

[1] 'A Cháṇḍála was a man born of the illegal and impure union of a Súdra with a woman of one of the three higher castes. The Cháṇḍála was regarded as the vilest and most abject of the men sprung from wedlock forbidden by the law (Mánavadharmaśástra, Lib. X. 12.); a kind of social malediction weighed upon his head and rejected him from human society.' GORRESIO.

Great Viśvámitra's side he sought,
Whose treasures were by penance bought.
The hermit with his tender eyes
Looked on Triśanku's altered guise,
And grieving at his ruined state
Addressed him thus, compassionate:
'Great King,' the pious hermit said,
'What cause thy steps has hither led,
Ayodhyá's mighty Sovereign, whom
A curse has plagued with outcast's doom?'
In vile Chaṇḍála's shape, the king
Heard Viśvámitra's questioning,
And, suppliant palm to palm applied,
With answering eloquence he cried:
'My priest and all his sons refused
To aid the plan on which I mused.
Failing to win the boon I sought,
To this condition I was brought.
I, in the body, Saint, would fain
A mansion in the skies obtain.
I planned a hundred rites for this,
But still was doomed the fruit to miss.
Pure are my lips from falsehood's stain,
And pure they ever shall remain,—
Yea, by a Warrior's faith I swear,—
Though I be tried with grief and care.
Unnumbered rites to Heaven I paid,
With righteous care the sceptre swayed;
And holy priest and high-souled guide
My modest conduct gratified.
But, O thou best of hermits, they
Oppose my wish these rites to pay;
They one and all refuse consent,
Nor aid me in my high intent.

Fate is, I ween, the power supreme,
Man's effort but an idle dream.
Fate whirls our plans, our all away;
Fate is our only hope and stay;
Now deign, O blessed Saint, to aid
Me, even me by Fate betrayed,
Who come, a suppliant, sore distressed,
One grace, O Hermit, to request.
No other hope or way I see;
No other refuge waits for me.
Oh, aid me in my fallen state,
And human will shall conquer Fate.'

CANTO LIX.

THE SONS OF VAŚISHṬHA.

Then Kuśik's son, by pity warmed,
Spoke sweetly to the king transformed:
'Hail! glory of Ikshváku's line:
I know how bright thy virtues shine.
Dismiss thy fear, O noblest Chief,
For I myself will bring relief.
The holiest saints will I invite
To celebrate thy purposed rite:
So shall thy vow, O King, succeed,
And from thy cares shalt thou be freed.
Thou in the form which now thou hast,
Transfigured by the curse they cast,—
Yea, in the body, King, shalt flee,
Transported, where thou fain wouldst be.
O Lord of men, I ween that thou
Hast heaven within thy hand e'en now,
For very wisely hast thou done,
And refuge sought with Kuśik's son.'
Thus having said, the sage addressed
His sons, of men the holiest,
And bade the prudent saints whate'er
Was needed for the rite prepare.
The pupils he was wont to teach
He summoned next, and spoke this speech:
'Go bid Vaśishṭha's sons appear,
And all the saints be gathered here.
And what they one and all reply
When summoned by this mandate high,

To me with faithful care report,
Omit no word and none distort.'

The pupils heard, and prompt obeyed,
To every side their way they made.
Then swift from every quarter sped
The sages in the Vedas read.
Back to that saint the envoys came,
Whose glory shone like burning flame,
And told him in their faithful speech
The answer that they bore from each:
'Submissive to thy word, O Seer,
The holy men are gathering here.
By all was meet obedience shown:
Mahodaya[1] refused alone.
And now, O Chief of hermits, hear
What answer, chilling us with fear,
Vaśishṭha's hundred sons returned,
Thick-speaking as with rage they burned:
'How will the Gods and saints partake
The offerings that the prince would make—
And he a vile and outcast thing,
His ministrant one born a king?
Can we, great Bráhmans, eat his food,
And think to win beatitude,
By Viśvámitra purified?'
Thus sire and sons in scorn replied,
And as these bitter words they said,
Wild fury made their eyeballs red.'

Their answer when the arch-hermit heard,
His tranquil eyes with rage were blurred;
Great fury in his bosom woke,
And thus unto the youths he spoke:

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[1] This appellation, occurring nowhere else in the poem except as the name of a city, appears twice in this Canto as a name of Vaśishṭha.

'Me, blameless me they dare to blame,
And disallow the righteous claim
My fierce austerities have earned:
To ashes be the sinners turned.
Caught in the noose of Fate shall they
To Yama's kingdom sink to-day.
Seven hundred times shall they be born
To wear the clothes the dead have worn.
Dregs of the dregs, too vile to hate,
The flesh of dogs their maws shall sate.
In hideous form, in loathsome weed,
A sad existence each shall lead.
Mahodaya too, the fool who fain
My stainless life would try to stain,
Stained in the world with long disgrace
Shall sink into a fowler's place.
Rejoicing guiltless blood to spill,
No pity through his breast shall thrill.
Cursed by my wrath for many a day,
His wretched life for sin shall pay.'

Thus, girt with hermit, saint, and priest,
Great Viśvámitra spoke—and ceased.

CANTO LX.

TRIŚANKU'S ASCENSION.

So with ascetic might, in ire,
He smote the children and the sire.
Then Viśvámitra, far-renowned,
Addressed the saints who gathered round:
'See by my side Triśanku stand,
Ikshváku's son, of liberal hand.
Most virtuous and gentle, he
Seeks refuge in his woe with me.
Now, holy men, with me unite,
And order so his purposed rite
That in the body he may rise
And win a mansion in the skies.'

They heard his speech with ready ear
And, every bosom filled with fear
Of Viśvámitra, wise and great,
Spoke each to each in brief debate:
'The breast of Kuśik's son, we know,
With furious wrath is quick to glow.
Whate'er the words he wills to say,
We must, be very sure, obey.
Fierce is our lord as fire, and straight
May curse us all infuriate.
So let us in these rites engage,
As ordered by the holy sage,
And with our best endeavour strive
That King Ikshváku's son, alive,
In body to the skies may go
By his great might who wills it so.'

Then was the rite begun with care:
All requisites and means were there:
And glorious Viśvámitra lent
His willing aid as president.
And all the sacred rites were done
By rule and use, omitting none,
By chaplain-priest, the hymns who knew,
In decent form and order due.
Some time in sacrifice had past,
And Viśvámitra made, at last,
The solemn offering with the prayer
That all the Gods might come and share.
But the Immortals, one and all,
Refused to hear the hermit's call.
Then red with rage his eyeballs blazed:
The sacred ladle high he raised,
And cried to King Ikshváku's son:
'Behold my power, by penance won:
Now by the might my merits lend,
Ikshváku's child, to heaven ascend.
In living frame the skies attain,
Which mortals thus can scarcely gain.
My vows austere, so long endured,
Have, as I ween, some fruit assured.
Upon its virtue, King, rely,
And in thy body reach the sky.

His speech had scarcely reached its close,
When, as he stood, the sovereign rose,
And mounted swiftly to the skies
Before the wondering hermits' eyes.
But Indra, when he saw the king
His blissful regions entering,
With all the army of the Blest
Thus cried unto the unbidden guest:

'With thy best speed, Triśanku, flee:
Here is no home prepared for thee.
By thy great master's curse brought low,
Go, falling headlong, earthward go.'
Thus by the Lord of Gods addressed,
Triśanku fell from fancied rest,
And screaming in his swift descent,
'O, save me, Hermit!' down he went.
And Viśvámitra heard his cry,
And marked him falling from the sky,
And giving all his passion sway,
Cried out in fury, 'Stay, O stay!'

By penance-power and holy lore,
Like Him who framed the worlds of yore,
Seven other saints he fixed on high
To star with light the southern sky.
Girt with his sages forth he went,
And southward in the firmament
New wreathed stars prepared to set
In many a sparkling coronet.
He threatened, blind with rage and hate,
Another Indra to create,
Or, from his throne the ruler hurled,
All Indraless to leave the world.
Yea, borne away by passion's storm,
The sage began new Gods to form.
But then each Titan, God, and saint,
Confused with terror, sick and faint,
To high-souled Viśvámitra hied,
And with soft words to soothe him tried:
'Lord of high destiny, this king,
To whom his master's curses cling,
No heavenly home deserves to gain,
Unpurified from curse and stain.'

The son of Kuśik, undeterred,
The pleading of the Immortals heard,
And thus in haughty words expressed
The changeless purpose of his breast:
'Content ye, Gods: I soothly sware
Triśanku to the skies to bear
Clothed in his body, nor can I
My promise cancel or deny.
Embodied let the king ascend
To life in heaven that ne'er shall end.
And let these new-made stars of mine
Firm and secure for ever shine.
Let these, my work, remain secure
Long as the earth and heaven endure.
This, all ye Gods, I crave: do you
Allow the boon for which I sue.'
Then all the Gods their answer made:
'So be it, Saint, as thou hast prayed.
Beyond the sun's diurnal way
Thy countless stars in heaven shall stay:
And 'mid them hung, as one divine,
Head downward shall Triśanku shine:
And all thy stars shall ever fling
Their rays attendant on the king.'[1]
The mighty saint, with glory crowned,
With all the sages compassed round,
Praised by the Gods, gave full assent,
And Gods and sages homeward went.

---

[1] 'The seven ancient *rishis* or saints, as has been said before, were the seven stars of Ursa Major. The seven other new saints which are here said to have been created by Viśvámitra, should be seven new southern stars, a sort of new Ursa. Von Schlegel thinks that this mythical fiction of new stars created by Viśvámitra may signify that these southern stars, unknown to the Indians as long as they remained in the neighbourhood of the Ganges, became known to them at a later date when they colonized the southern regions of India.' GORRESIO.

CANTO LXI.

ŚUNAHŚEPHA.

Then Viśvámitra, when the Blest
Had sought their homes of heavenly rest,
Thus, mighty Prince, his counsel laid
Before the dwellers of the shade:
'The southern land where now we are
Offers this check our rites to bar:[1]
To other regions let us speed,
And ply our tasks from trouble freed.
Now turn we to the distant west,
To Pushkar's[2] wood where hermits rest,
And there to rites austere apply,
For not a grove with that can vie.'
  The saint, in glory's light arrayed,
In Pushkar's wood his dwelling made,
And living there on roots and fruit
Did penance stern and résolute.

---

[1] 'This cannot refer to the events just related: for Viśvámitra was successful in the sacrifice performed for Triśanku. And yet no other impediment is mentioned. Still his restless mind would not allow him to remain longer in the same spot. So the character of Viśvámitra is ingeniously and skilfully shadowed forth; as he had been formerly a most warlike king, loving battle and glory, bold, active, sometimes unjust, and more frequently magnanimous, such also he always shows himself in his character of anchorite and ascetic.' SCHLEGEL.

[2] Near the modern city of Ajmere. The place is sacred still, and the name is preserved in the Hindí. Lassen, however, says that this Pushkala or Pushkara, called by the Grecian writers Πευκελαῖτις, the earliest place of pilgrimage mentioned by name, is not to be confounded with the modern Pushkara in Ajmere.

The king who filled Ayodhyá's throne,
By Ambarísha's name far known,
At that same time, it chanced, began
A sacrificial rite to plan.
But Indra took by force away
The charger that the king would slay.
The victim lost, the Bráhman sped
To Ambarísha's side, and said:
'Gone is the steed, O King, and this
Is due to thee, in care remiss.
Such heedless faults will kings destroy
Who fail to guard what they enjoy.
The flaw is desperate: we need
The charger, or a man to bleed.
Quick! bring a man, if not the horse,
That so the rite may have its course.'

The glory of Ikshváku's line
Made offer of a thousand kine,
And sought to buy at lordly price
A victim for the sacrifice.
To many a distant land he drove,
To many a people, town, and grove,
And holy shades where hermits rest,
Pursuing still his eager quest.
At length on Bhrigu's sacred height
The saint Richíka met his sight
Sitting beneath the holy boughs,
His children near him, and his spouse.

The mighty lord drew near, assayed
To win his grace, and reverence paid;
And then the sainted king addressed
The Bráhman saint with this request:
'Bought with a hundred thousand kine,

Give me, O Sage, a son of thine
To be a victim in the rite,
And thanks the favour shall requite.
For I have roamed all countries round,
Nor sacrificial victim found.
Then, gentle Hermit, deign to spare
One child amid the number there.'

Then to the monarch's speech replied
The hermit, penance-glorified:
'For countless kine, for hills of gold,
Mine eldest son shall ne'er be sold.'
But, when she heard the saint's reply,
The children's mother, standing nigh,
Words such as these in answer said
To Ambarísha, monarch dread:
'My lord, the saint, has spoken well:
His eldest child he will not sell.
And know, great Monarch, that above
The rest my youngest born I love.
'Tis ever thus: the father's joy
Is centred in his eldest boy.
The mother loves her darling best
Whom last she rocked upon her breast:
My youngest I will ne'er forsake.'

As thus the sire and mother spake,
Young Śunahśepha, of the three
The midmost, cried unurged and free:
'My sire withholds his eldest son,
My mother keeps her youngest one:
Then take me with thee, King: I ween
The son is sold who comes between.'
The king with joy his home resought,
And took the prize his kine had bought.

He bade the youth his car ascend,
And hastened back the rites to end.[1]

---

[1] 'Ambarísha is the twenty-ninth in descent from Ikshváku, and is therefore separated by an immense space of time from Trisanku in whose story Viśvámitra had played so important a part. Yet Richíka, who is represented as having young sons while Ambarísha was yet reigning, being himself the son of Bhrigu and to be numbered with the most ancient sages, is said to have married the younger sister of Viśvámitra. But I need not again remark that there is a perpetual anachronism in Indian mythology.' SCHLEGEL.

'In the mythical story related in this and the following Canto we may discover, I think, some indication of the epoch at which the immolation of lower animals was substituted for human sacrifice............So when Iphigenia was about to be sacrificed at Aulis, one legend tells us that a hind was substituted for the virgin.' GORRESIO.

So the ram caught in the thicket took the place of Isaac, or, as the Musalmáns say, of Ishmael.

CANTO LXII.

AMBARÍSHA'S SACRIFICE.

As thus the king that youth conveyed,
His weary steeds at length he stayed
At height of noon their rest to take
Upon the bank of Pushkar's lake.
There while the king enjoyed repose
The captive Śunahśepha rose,
And hasting to the water's side
His uncle Viśvámitra spied,
With many a hermit 'neath the trees
Engaged in stern austerities.
  Distracted with the toil and thirst,
With woeful mien, away he burst,
Swift to the hermit's breast he flew,
And weeping thus began to sue:
'No sire have I, no mother dear,
No kith or kin my heart to cheer:
As justice bids, O Hermit, deign
To save me from the threatened pain.
O thou to whom the wretched flee,
And find a saviour, Saint, in thee,
Now let the king obtain his will,
And me my length of days fulfil,
That rites austere I too may share,
May rise to heaven and rest me there.
With tender soul and gentle brow
Be guardian of the orphan thou,
And as a father pities, so
Preserve me from my fear and woe.

When Viśvámitra, glorious saint,
Had heard the boy's heartrending plaint,
He soothed his grief, his tears he dried,
Then called his sons to him, and cried:
'The time is come for you to show
The duty and the aid bestow
For which, regarding future life,
A man gives children to his wife.
This hermit's son, whom here you see
A suppliant, refuge seeks with me.
O sons, the friendless youth befriend,
And, pleasing me, his life defend.
For holy works you all have wrought,
True to the virtuous life I taught.
Go, and as victims doomed to bleed,
Die, and Lord Agni's hunger feed.
So shall the rite completed end,
This orphan gain a saving friend,
Due offerings to the Gods be paid,
And your own father's voice obeyed.'

Then Madhushyand and all the rest
Answered their sire with scorn and jest:
'What! aid to others' sons afford,
And leave thine own to die, my lord!
To us it seems a horrid deed,
As 'twere on one's own flesh to feed.'
The hermit heard his sons' reply,
And burning rage inflamed his eye.
Then forth his words of fury burst:
'Audacious speech, by virtue cursed!
It lifts on end each shuddering hair—
My charge to scorn! my wrath to dare!
You, like Vaśishṭha's evil brood,
Shall make the flesh of dogs your food

A thousand years in many a birth,
And punished thus shall dwell on earth.'

Thus on his sons his curse he laid,
Then calmed again that youth dismayed,
And blessed him with his saving aid:
'When in the sacred fetters bound,
And with a purple garland crowned,
At Vishṇu's post thou standest tied,
With lauds be Agni glorified.
And these two hymns of holy praise
Forget not, Hermit's son, to raise
In the king's rite, and thou shalt be
Lord of thy wish, preserved, and free.'
He learnt the hymns with mind intent,
And from the hermit's presence went.
To Ambarísha thus he spake:
'Let us our onward journey take.
Haste to thy home, O King, nor stay
The lustral rites with slow delay.'
The boy's address the monarch cheered,
And soon the sacred ground he neared.
The convocation's high decree
Declared the youth from blemish free;
Clothed in red raiment he was tied
A victim at the pillar's side.
There bound, the Fire-God's hymn he raised,
And Indra and Upendra praised.
Thousand-eyed Vishṇu, pleased to hear
The mystic laud, inclined his ear,
And won by worship, swift to save,
Long life to Śunahśepha gave.
The king in bounteous measure gained
The fruit of sacrifice ordained,
By grace of Him who rules the skies,

Lord Indra of the thousand eyes.
 And Viśvámitra evermore
Pursued his task on Pushkar's shore
Until a thousand years had past
In fierce austerity and fast.

CANTO LXIII.

MENAKÁ.

A thousand years had thus flown by
When all the Gods within the sky,
Eager that he the fruit might gain
Of fervent rite and holy pain,
Approached the great ascetic, now
Bathed after toil and ended vow.
Then Brahmá speaking for the rest
With sweetest words the sage addressed:
'Hail, Saint! This high and holy name
Thy rites have won, thy merits claim.'
  Thus spoke the Lord whom Gods revere,
And sought again his heavenly sphere.
But Viśvámitra, more intent,
His mind to sterner penance bent.
  So many a season rolled away,
When Menaká, fair nymph, one day
Came down from Paradise to lave
Her perfect limbs in Pushkar's wave.
The glorious son of Kuśik saw
That peerless shape without a flaw
Flash through the flood's translucent shroud
Like lightning gleaming through a cloud.
He saw her in that lone retreat,
Most beautiful from head to feet,
And by Kandarpa's[1] might subdued
He thus addressed her as he viewed:

---

[1] The Indian Cupid.

'Welcome, sweet nymph! O deign, I pray,
In these calm shades awhile to stay.
To me some gracious favour show,
For love has set my breast aglow.'

He spoke. The fairest of the fair
Made for awhile her dwelling there,
While day by day the wild delight
Stayed vow austere and fervent rite.
There as the winsome charmer wove
Her spells around him in the grove,
And bound him in a golden chain,
Five sweet years fled, and five again.
Then Viśvámitra woke to shame,
And, fraught with anguish, memory came,
For quick he knew, with anger fired,
That all the Immortals had conspired
To lap his carelss soul in ease,
And mar his long austerities.
'Ten years have past, each day and night
Unheeded in delusive flight.
So long my fervent rites were stayed,
While thus I lay by love betrayed.'
As thus long sighs the hermit heaved,
And, touched with deep repentance, grieved,
He saw the fair one standing nigh
With suppliant hands and trembling eye.
With gentle words he bade her go,
Then sought the northern hills of snow.
With firm resolve he vowed to beat
The might of Love beneath his feet.
Still northward to the distant side
Of Kauśikí[2], the hermit hied,

[2] 'The same as she whose praises Viśvámitra has already sung in Canto XXXV, and whom the poet brings yet alive upon the scene in Canto LXI. Her proper name was *Satyavatí* (Truthful); the patrony-

And gave his life to penance there
With rites austere most hard to bear.
A thousand years, went by, and still
He laboured on the northern hill
With pains so terrible and drear
That all the Gods were chilled with fear.
And Gods and saints, for swift advice,
Met in the halls of Paradise.
'Let Kuśik's son,' they counselled, 'be
A Mighty saint by just decree.'
His ear to hear their counsel lent
The Sire of worlds, omnipotent.
To him enriched by rites severe
He spoke in accents sweet to hear:
'Hail, Mighty Saint! dear son, all hail!
Thy fervour wins, thy toils prevail.
Won by thy vows and zeal intense
I give this high preëminence.'
He to the General Sire replied,
Not sad, nor wholly satisfied:
'When thou, O Brahmá, shalt declare
The title, great beyond compare,
Of Bráhman saint my worthy meed,
Hard earned by many a holy deed,
Then may I deem in sooth I hold

---

mic, Kauśikí was preserved by the river into which she is said to have been changed, and is still recognized in the corrupted forms Kusa and Kuśí. The river flows from the heights of the Himalaya towards the Ganges, bounding on the east the country of Videha (Behar). The name is nc doubt half hidden in the *Cosoagus* of Pliny and the *Kossoanos* of Arrian. But each author has fallen into the same error in his enumeration of these rivers (Condochatem, Erannoboam, Cosoagum, Sonum). The Erannoboas, (Hiraṇyaváha) and the Sone are not different streams, but well-known names of the same river. Moreover the order is disturbed, in which on the right and left they fall into the Ganges. To be consistent with geography it should be written: Erannoboam sive Sonum, Condochatem (Gandakí), Cosoagum.' SCHLEGEL.

Each sense of body well controlled.'
Then Brahmá cried, 'Not yet, not yet:
Toil on awhile O Anchoret!'

Thus having said to heaven he went.
The saint, upon his task intent,
Began his labours to renew,
Which sterner yet and fiercer grew.
His arms upraised, without a rest,
With but one foot the earth he pressed;
The air his food, the hermit stood
Still as a pillar hewn from wood.
Around him in the summer days
Five mighty fires combined to blaze.
In floods of rain no veil was spread
Save clouds, to canopy his head.
In the dank dews both night and day
Couched in the stream the hermit lay.
Thus, till a thousand years had fled,
He plied his task of penance dread.
Then Vishṇu and the Gods with awe
The labours of the hermit saw,
And Śakra, in his troubled breast,
Lord of the skies, his fear confessed,
And brooded on a plan to spoil
The merits of the hermit's toil.
Encompassed by his Gods of Storm
He summoned Rambhá, fair of form,
And spoke a speech for woe and weal,
The saint to mar, the God to heal.

CANTO LXIV.

RAMBHÁ.

'A great emprise, O lovely maid,
To save the Gods, awaits thine aid:
To bind the son of Kuśik sure,
And take his soul with love's sweet lure.'
Thus ordered by the Thousand-eyed
The suppliant nymph in fear replied:
'O Lord of Gods, this mighty sage
Is very fierce and swift to rage.
I doubt not, he so dread and stern
On me his scorching wrath will turn.
Of this, my lord, am I afraid:
Have mercy on a timid maid.'
Her suppliant hands began to shake,
When thus again Lord Indra spake:
'O Rambhá, drive thy fears away,
And as I bid do thou obey.
In Koïl's form, who takes the heart
When trees in spring to blossom start,
I, with Kandarpa for my friend,
Close to thy side mine aid will lend.
Do thou thy beauteous splendour arm
With every grace and winsome charm,
And from his awful rites seduce
This Kuśik's son, the stern recluse.'

Lord Indra ceased. The nymph obeyed:
In all her loveliest charms arrayed,
With winning ways and witching smile
She sought the hermit to beguile.

The sweet note of that tuneful bird
The saint with ravished bosom heard,
And on his heart a rapture passed
As on the nymph a look he cast.
But when he heard the bird prolong
His sweet incomparable song,
And saw the nymph with winning smile,
The hermit's heart perceived the wile.
And straight he knew the Thousand-eyed
A plot against his peace had tried.
Then Kuśik's son indignant laid
His curse upon the heavenly maid :
'Because thou wouldst my soul engage
Who fight to conquer love and rage,
Stand, till ten thousand years have flown,
Ill-fated maid, transformed to stone.
A Bráhman then, in glory strong,
Mighty through penance stern and long,
Shall free thee from thine altered shape ;
Thou from my curse shalt then escape'.
But when the saint had cursed her so,
His breast was burnt with fires of woe,
Grieved that long effort to restrain
His mighty wrath was all in vain.
Cursed by the angry sage's power,
She stood in stone that selfsame hour.
Kandarpa heard the words he said,
And quickly from his presence fled.
His fall beneath his passion's sway
Had reft the hermit's meed away.
Unconquered yet his secret foes,
The humbled saint refused repose :
'No more shall rage my bosom fill,
Sealed be my lips, my tongue be still.

My very breath henceforth I hold
Until a thousand years are told :
Victorious o'er each erring sense,
I'll dry my frame with abstinence,
Until by penance duly done
A Bráhman's rank be bought and won.
For countless years, as still as death,
I taste no food, I draw no breath,
And as I toil my frame shall stand
Unharmed by time's destroying hand.'

CANTO LXV.

VIŚVÁMITRA'S TRIUMPH.

Then from Himálaya's heights of snow,
The glorious saint prepared to go,
And dwelling in the distant east
His penance and his toil increased.
A thousand years his lips he held
Closed by a vow unparalleled,
And other marvels passing thought,
Unrivalled in the world, he wrought.
In all the thousand years his frame
Dry as a log of wood became.
By many a cross and check beset,
Rage had not stormed his bosom yet.
With iron will that naught could bend
He plied his labour till the end.
So when the weary years were o'er,
Freed from his vow so stern and sore,
The hermit, all his penance sped,
Sate down to eat his meal of bread.
Then Indra, clad in Bráhman guise,
Asked him for food with hungry eyes.
The mighty saint, with steadfast soul,
To the false Bráhman gave the whole,
And when no scrap for him remained,
Fasting and faint, from speech refrained.
His silent vow he would not break:
No breath he heaved, no word he spake.
Then as he checked his breath, behold!
Around his brow thick smoke-clouds rolled,

And the three worlds, as if o'erspread
With ravening flames, were filled with dread.
Then God and saint and bard, convened,
And Nága lord, and snake, and fiend,
Thus to the General Father cried,
Distracted, sad, and terrified:
'Against the hermit, sore assailed,
Lure, scathe, and scorn have naught availed,
Proof against rage and treacherous art
He keeps his vow with constant heart.
Now if his toils assist him naught
To gain the boon his soul has sought,
He through the worlds will ruin send
That fixt and moving things shall end.
The regions now are dark with doom,
No friendly ray relieves the gloom.
Each ocean foams with maddened tide,
The shrinking hills in fear subside.
Trembles the earth with feverous throes,
The wind in fitful tempest blows.
No cure we see with troubled eyes:
An atheist brood on earth may rise.
The triple world is wild with care,
Or spiritless in dull despair.
Before that saint the sun is dim,
His blessed light eclipsed by him.
Now ere the saint resolve to bring
Destruction on each living thing,
Let us appease, while yet we may,
Him bright as fire, like fire to slay.
Yea, as the fiery flood of Fate
Lays all creation desolate,
He o'er the conquered Gods may reign:
O, grant him what he longs to gain.'

Then all the Blest, by Brahmá led,
Approached the saint and sweetly said:
'Hail, Bráhman Saint! for such thy place:
Thy vows austere have won our grace.
A Bráhman's rank thy penance stern
And ceaseless labour richly earn.
I with the Gods of Storm decree
Long life, O Bráhman Saint, to thee.
May peace and joy thy soul possess:
Go where thou wilt in happiness.'
Thus by the General Sire addressed,
Joy and high triumph filled his breast.
His head in adoration bowed,
Thus spoke he to the Immortal crowd:
'If I, ye Gods, have gained at last
Both length of days and Bráhman caste,
Grant that the high mysterious name,
And holy Vedas, own my claim,
And that the formula to bless
The sacrifice, its lord confess.
And let Vaśishṭha, who excels
In Warriors' art and mystic spells,
In love of God without a peer,
Confirm the boon you promise here.'

With Brahmá's son Vaśishṭha, best
Of those who pray with voice repressed,
The Gods by earnest prayer prevailed,
And thus his new-made friend he hailed:
'Thy title now is sure and good
To rights of saintly Bráhmanhood.'
Thus spake the sage. The Gods, content,
Back to their heavenly mansions went.
And Viśvámitra, pious-souled,
Among the Bráhman saints enrolled,

On reverend Vaśishṭha pressed
The honours due to holy guest.
Successful in his high pursuit,
The sage, in penance resolute,
Walked in his pilgrim wanderings o'er
The whole broad land from shore to shore.
'Twas thus the saint, O Raghu's son,
His rank among the Bráhmans won.
Best of all hermits, Prince, is he:
In him incarnate Penance see.
Friend of the right, who shrinks from ill,
Heroic powers attend him still.'

The Bráhman, versed in ancient lore,
Thus closed his tale, and said no more.
To Śatánanda Kuśik's son
Cried in delight, Well done! well done!
Then Janak, at the tale amazed,
Spoke thus with suppliant hands upraised:
'High fate is mine, O Sage, I deem,
And thanks I owe for bliss supreme,
That thou and Raghu's children too
Have come my sacrifice to view.
To look on thee with blessed eyes
Exalts my soul and purifies.
Yea, thus to see thee face to face
Enriches me with store of grace.
Thy holy labours wrought of old,
And mighty penance, fully told,
Ráma and I with great delight
Have heard, O glorious Anchorite.
Unrivalled thine ascetic deeds:
Thy might, O Saint, all might exceeds.
No thought may scan, no limit bound
The virtues that in thee are found.

The story of thy wondrous fate
My thirsty ears can never sate.
The hour of evening rites is near:
The sun declines in swift career.
At early dawn, O Hermit, deign
To let me see thy face again.
Best of ascetics, part in bliss:
Do thou thy servant now dismiss.'

The saint approved, and glad and kind
Dismissed the king with joyful mind.
Around the sage King Janak went
With priests and kinsmen reverent.
Then Viśvámitra, honoured so,
By those high-minded, rose to go,
And with the princes took his way
To seek the lodging where they lay.

CANTO LXVI.

JANAK'S SPEECH.

With cloudless lustre rose the sun ;
The king, his morning worship done,
Ordered his heralds to invite
The princes and the anchorite.
With honour, as the laws decree,
The monarch entertained the three.
Then to the youths and saintly man
Videha's lord this speech began :
'O blameless Saint, most welcome thou !
If I may please thee tell me how.
Speak, mighty lord, whom all revere,
'Tis thine to order, mine to hear.'

Thus he on mighty thoughts intent ;
Then thus the sage most eloquent :
'King Daśaratha's sons, this pair
Of warriors famous everywhere,
Are come that best of bows to see
That lies a treasure stored by thee.
This, mighty Janak, deign to show,
That they may look upon the bow,
And then, contented, homeward go.'
Then royal Janak spoke in turn :
'O best of Saints, the story learn
Why this famed bow, a noble prize,
A treasure in my palace lies.
A monarch, Devarát by name,
Who sixth from ancient Nimi came,
Held it as ruler of the land,

A pledge in his successive hand.
This bow the mighty Rudra bore
At Daksha's[1] sacrifice of yore,
When carnage of the Immortals stained
The rite that Daksha had ordained.
Then as the Gods sore wounded fled,
Victorious Rudra, mocking, said:
'Because, O Gods, ye gave me naught
When I my rightful portion sought,
Your dearest parts I will not spare,
But with my bow your frames will tear:'
The Sons of Heaven, in wild alarm,
Soft flatteries tried his rage to charm.
Then Bhava, Lord whom Gods adore,
Grew kind and friendly as before,
And every torn and mangled limb
Was safe and sound restored by him.
Thenceforth this bow, the gem of bows,
That freed the God of Gods from foes,
Stored by our great forefathers lay
A treasure and a pride for aye.
Once, as it chanced, I ploughed the ground,
When sudden, 'neath the share was found
An infant springing from the earth,
Named Sítá from her secret birth.[2]

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[1] Daksha was one of the ancient Progenitors or Prajápatis created by Brahmá. The sacrifice which is here spoken of and in which Śankar or Śiva (called also here Rudra and Bhava) smote the Gods because he had not been invited to share the sacred oblations with them, seems to refer to the origin of the worship of Śiva, to its increase and to the struggle it maintained with other older forms of worship.' GORRESIO.

[2] Sítá means a furrow.

'Great Erectheus swayed,
That owed his nurture to the blue-eyed maid,
But from the teeming furrow took his birth,
The mighty offspring of the foodful earth.'

Iliad. Book II.

In strength and grace the maiden grew,
My cherished daughter, fair to view.
I vowed her, of no mortal birth,
Meet prize for noblest hero's worth.
In strength and grace the maiden grew,
And many a monarch came to woo.
To all the princely suitors I
Gave, mighty Saint, the same reply:
'I give not thus my daughter, she
Prize of heroic worth shall be.'
To Mithilá the suitors pressed
Their power and might to manifest.
To all who came with hearts aglow
I offered Śiva's wondrous bow.
Not one of all the royal band
Could raise or take the bow in hand.
The suitors' puny might I spurned,
And back the feeble princes turned.
Enraged thereat, the warriors met,
With force combined my town beset.
Stung to the heart with scorn and shame,
With war and threats they madly came,
Besieged my peaceful walls, and long
To Mithilá did grievous wrong.
There, wasting all, a year they lay,
And brought my treasures to decay,
Filling my soul, O Hermit chief,
With bitter woe and hopeless grief.
At last by long-wrought penance I
Won favour with the Gods on high,
Who with my labours well content
A four-fold host to aid me sent.

'The whole story of Sítá, as will be seen in the course of the poem has a great analogy with the ancient myth of Proserpine.' GORRESIO.

Then swift the baffled heroes fled
To all the winds discomfited—
Wrong-doers, with their lords and host,
And all their valour's idle boast.
This heavenly bow, exceeding bright,
These youths shall see, O Anchorite.
Then if young Ráma's hand can string
The bow that baffled lord and king,
To him I give, as I have sworn,
My Sítá, not of woman born'.

CANTO LXVII.

THE BREAKING OF THE BOW.

Then spoke again the great recluse:
'This mighty bow, O King, produce'.
King Janak, at the saint's request,
This order to his train addressed:
'Let the great bow be hither borne,
Which flowery wreaths and scents adorn'.
Soon as the monarch's words were said,
His servants to the city sped:
Five thousand youths in number, all
Of manly strength and stature tall,
The ponderous eight-wheeled chest that held
The heavenly bow, with toil propelled.
At length they brought that iron chest,
And thus the godlike king addressed:
'This best of bows, O lord, we bring,
Respected by each chief and king,
And place it for these youths to see,
If, Sovereign, such thy pleasure be'.
With suppliant palm to palm applied
King Janak to the strangers cried:
'This gem of bows, O Bráhman Sage,
Our race has prized from age to age,
Too strong for those who yet have reigned,
Though great in might each nerve they strained.
Titan and fiend its strength defies,
God, spirit, minstrel of the skies.
And bard above and snake below
Are baffled by this glorious bow.

Then how may human prowess hope
With such a bow as this to cope?
What man with valour's choicest gift
This bow can draw, or string, or lift?
Yet let the princes, holy Seer,
Behold it: it is present here'.

Then spoke the hermit pious-souled:
'Ráma, dear son, the bow behold.'
Then Ráma at his word unclosed
The chest wherein its might reposed,
Thus crying, as he viewed it: 'Lo!
I lay mine hand upon the bow:
May happy luck my hope attend
Its heavenly strength to lift or bend.'
'Good luck be thine', the hermit cried:
'Assay the task!' the king replied.
Then Raghu's son, as if in sport,
Before the thousands of the court,
The weapon by the middle raised
That all the crowd in wonder gazed.
With steady arm the string he drew
Till burst the mighty bow in two.
As snapped the bow, an awful clang,
Loud as the shriek of tempests, rang.
The earth, affrighted, shook amain
As when a hill is rent in twain.
Then, senseless at the fearful sound,
The people fell upon the ground:
None save the king, the princely pair,
And the great saint, the shock could bear.
When woke to sense the stricken train,
And Janak's soul was calm again,
With suppliant hands and reverent head,
These words, most eloquent, he said:

'O Saint, Prince Ráma stands alone:
His peerless might he well has shown.
A marvel has the hero wrought
Beyond belief, surpassing thought.
My child, to royal Ráma wed,
New glory on our line will shed:
And true my promise will remain
That hero's worth the bride should gain.
Dearer to me than light and life,
My Sítá shall be Ráma's wife.
If thou, O Bráhman, leave concede,
My counsellors, with eager speed,
Borne in their flying cars, to fair
Ayodhyá's town the news shall bear,
With courteous message to entreat
The king to grace my royal seat.
This to the monarch shall they tell,
The bride is his who won her well:
And his two sons are resting here
Protected by the holy seer.
So, at his pleasure, let them lead
The sovereign to my town with speed.'

The hermit to his prayer inclined
And Janak, lord of virtuous mind,
With charges, to Ayodhyá sent
His ministers: and forth they went.

CANTO LXVIII.

THE ENVOYS' SPEECH.

Three nights upon the road they passed
To rest the steeds that bore them fast,
And reached Ayodhyá's town at last.
Then straight at Daśaratha's call
They stood within the royal hall,
Where, like a God, inspiring awe,
The venerable king they saw.
With suppliant palm to palm applied,
And all their terror laid aside,
They spoke to him upon the throne
With modest words, in gentle tone:
'Janak, Videha's king, O Sire,
Has sent us hither to inquire
The health of thee his friend most dear,
Of all thy priests and every peer.
Next Kuśik's son consenting, thus
King Janak speaks, dread liege, by us:
'I made a promise and decree
That valour's prize my child should be.
Kings, worthless found in worth's assay,
With mien dejected turned away.
Thy sons, by Viśvámitra led,
Unurged, my city visited,
And peerless in their might have gained
My daughter, as my vow ordained.
Full in a vast assembly's view
Thy hero Ráma broke in two
The gem of bows, of monstrous size,

That came a treasure from the skies.
Ordained the prize of hero's might,
Sítá my child is his by right.
Fain would I keep my promise made,
If thou, O King, approve and aid.
Come to my town thy son to see:
Bring holy guide and priest with thee.
O lord of kings, my suit allow,
And let me keep my promised vow.
So joying for thy children's sake
Their triumph too shalt thou partake,
With Viśvámitra's high consent.'
'Such words with friendship eloquent
Spoke Janak, fair Videha's king,
By Śatánanda's counselling.'

The envoys thus the king addressed,
And mighty joy his heart possessed.
To Vámadeva quick he cried,
Vaśishṭha, and his lords beside:
'Lakshmaṇ, and he, my princely boy
Who fills Kauśalyá's soul with joy,
By Viśvámitra guarded well
Among the good Videhans dwell.
Their ruler Janak, prompt to own
The peerless might my child has shown,
To him would knit in holy ties
His daughter, valour's lovely prize.
If Janak's plan seem good to you,
Come, speed we to his city too,
Nor let occasion idly by.'

He ceased. There came a glad reply
From priest and mighty saint and all
The councillors who thronged the hall.
Then cried the king with joyous heart:

'To-morrow let us all depart.'
That night the envoys entertained
With honour and all care remained.

CANTO LXIX.

DAŚARATHA'S VISIT.

Soon as the shades of night had fled,
Thus to the wise Sumantra said
The happy king, while priest and peer,
Each in his place, were standing near:
'Let all my treasurers to-day,
Set foremost in the long array,
With gold and precious gems supplied
In bounteous store, together ride.
And send you out a mighty force,
Foot, chariot, elephant, and horse.
Besides, let many a car of state,
And noblest steeds, my will await.
Vaśishṭha, Vámadeva sage,
And Márkaṇḍeya's reverend age,
Jáváli, Kaśyap's godlike seed,
And wise Kátyáyana, shall lead.
Thy care, Sumantra, let it be
To yoke a chariot now for me,
That so we part without delay:
These envoys hasten me away.'

So fared he forth. That host, with speed,
Quadruple, as the king decreed,
With priests to head the bright array,
Followed the monarch on his way.
Four days they travelled on the road,
And eve Videha's kingdom showed.
Janak had left his royal seat
The venerable king to greet,

And, noblest, with these words addressed
That noblest lord, his happy guest:
'Hail, best of kings: a blessed fate
Has led thee, Monarch, to my state.
Thy sons, supreme in high emprise,
Will gladden now their father's eyes.
And high my fate, that hither leads
Vaśishṭha, bright with holy deeds,
Girt with these sages far-renowned,
Like Indra with the Gods around.
Joy! joy! for vanquished are my foes:
Joy! for my house in glory grows,
With Raghu's noblest sons allied,
Supreme in strength and valour's pride.
To-morrow with its early light
Will shine on my completed rite.
Then, sanctioned by the saints and thee,
The marriage of thy Ráma see.'

Then Daśaratha, best of those
Whose speech in graceful order flows,
With gathered saints on every side,
Thus to the lord of earth replied:
'A truth is this I long have known,
A favour is the giver's own.
What thou shalt bid, O good and true,
We, as our power permits, will do.'
That answer of the truthful lord,
With virtuous worth and honour stored,
Janak, Videha's noble king,
Heard gladly, greatly marvelling.
With bosoms filled with pleasure met
Long-parted saint and anchoret,
And linked in friendship's tie they spent
The peaceful night in great content.

Ráma and Lakshmaṇ thither sped,
By sainted Viśvámitra led,
And bent in filial love to greet
Their father, and embraced his feet.
The aged king, rejoiced to hear
And see again his children dear,
Honoured by Janak's thoughtful care,
With great enjoyment rested there.
King Janak, with attentive heed,
Consulted first his daughters' need,
And ordered all to speed the rite ;
Then rested also for the night.

CANTO LXX.

THE MAIDENS SOUGHT.

Then with the morn's returning sun,
King Janak, when his rites were done,
Skilled all the charms of speech to know,
Spoke to wise Śatánanda so:
'My brother, lord of glorious fame,
My younger, Kuśadhwaj by name,
Whose virtuous life has won renown,
Has settled in a lovely town,
Sánkáśyá, decked with grace divine,
Whose glories bright as Pushpak's shine,
While Ikshumatí rolls her wave
Her lofty rampart's foot to lave.
Him, holy priest, I long to see:
The guardian of my rite is he:
That my dear brother may not miss
A share of mine expected bliss.'

Thus in the presence of the priest
The royal Janak spoke, and ceased.
Then came his henchmen, prompt and brave,
To whom his charge the monarch gave.
Soon as they heard his will, in haste
With fleetest steeds away they raced,
To lead with them that lord of kings,
As Indra's call Lord Vishṇu brings.
Sánkáśyá's walls they duly gained,
And audience of the king obtained.
To him they told the news they brought
Of marvels past and Janak's thought.

Soon as the king the story knew
From those good envoys swift and true,
To Janak's wish he gave assent,
And swift to Mithilá he went.
He paid to Janak reverence due,
And holy Śatánanda too,
Then sate him on a glorious seat
For kings or Gods celestial meet.
Soon as the brothers, noble pair
Peerless in might, were seated there,
They gave the wise Sudáman, best
Of councillors, their high behest :
'Go, noble councillor', they cried,
'And hither to our presence guide
Ikshváku's son, Ayodhyá's lord,
Invincible by foeman's sword,
With both his sons, each holy seer,
And every minister and peer.'
Sudáman to the palace flew,
And saw the mighty king who threw
Splendour on Raghu's splendid race,
Then bowed his head with seemly grace :
'O King, whose hand Ayodhyá sways,
My lord, whom Mithilá obeys,
Yearns with desire, if thou agree,
Thee with thy guide and priest to see.'
Soon as the councillor had ceased,
The king, with saint and peer and priest,
Sought, speeding through the palace gate,
The hall where Janak held his state.
There, with his nobles round him spread,
Thus to Videha's lord he said :
'Thou knowest, King, whose aid divine
Protects Ikshváku's royal line.

In every need, whate'er befall,
The saint Vaśishṭha speaks for all.
If Viśvámitra so allow,
And all the saints around me now,
The sage will speak, at my desire,
As order and the truth require.'

Soon as the king his lips had stilled,
Up rose Vaśishṭha, speaker skilled,
And to Videha's lord began
In flowing words that holy man:
'From viewless Nature Brahmá rose,
No change, no end, no waste he knows.
A son had he Maríchi styled,
And Kaśyap was Maríchi's child.
From him Vivasvat sprang: from him
Manu whose fame shall ne'er be dim.
Manu, who life to mortals gave,
Begot Ikshváku good and brave.
First of Ayodhyá's kings was he,
Pride of her famous dynasty.
From him the glorious Kukshi sprang,
Whose fame through all the regions rang.
Rival of Kukshi's ancient fame,
His heir, the great Vikukshi, came.
His son was Váṇa, lord of might;
His Anaraṇya, strong to fight.
His son was Prithu, glorious name;
From him the good Triśanku came.
He left a son renowned afar,
Known by the name of Dhundhumár.
His son, who drove the mighty car,
Was Yuvanáśva, feared in war.
He passed away. Him followed then
His son Mándhátá, king of men.

His son was blest in high emprise,
Susandhi, fortunate and wise.
Two noble sons had he, to wit
Dhruvasandhi and Prasenajit.
Bharat was Dhruvasandhi's son,
And glorious fame that monarch won.
The warrior Asit he begot.
Asit had warfare, fierce and hot,
With rival kings in many a spot,
Haihayas, Tálajanghas styled,
And Śaśivindhus, strong and wild.
Long time he strove, but forced to yield
Fled from his kingdom and the field.
With his two wives away he fled
Where high Himálaya lifts his head,
And, all his wealth and glory past,
He paid the dues of Fate at last.
The wives he left had both conceived—
So is the ancient tale believed—
One, of her rival's hopes afraid,
Fell poison in her viands laid.
It chanced that Chyavan, Bhrigu's child,
Had wandered to that pathless wild,
And there Himálaya's lovely height
Detained him with a strange delight.
There came the other widowed queen,
With lotus eyes and beauteous mien,
Longing a noble son to bear,
And wooed the saint with earnest prayer.
When thus Kálindí,[1] fairest dame,
With reverent supplication came,
To her the holy sage replied :

[1] A different lady from the Goddess of the Jumna who bears the same name.

'Born with the poison from thy side,
O happy Queen, shall spring ere long
An infant fortunate and strong.
Then weep no more, and check thy sighs,
Sweet lady of the lotus eyes.'
The queen, who loved her perished lord,
For meet reply, the saint adored,
And, of her husband long bereaved,
She bore a son by him conceived.
Because her rival mixed the bane
To render her conception vain,
And fruit unripened to destroy,
Sagar[1] she called her darling boy.
To Sagar Asamanj was heir:
Bright Anśumán his consort bare.
Anśumán's son, Dilípa famed,
Begot a son Bhagírath named.
From him the great Kakutstha rose:
From him came Raghu, feared by foes.
Of him sprang Purushádak bold,
Fierce hero of gigantic mould:
Kalmáshapáda's name he bore,
Because his feet were spotted o'er.[2]
From him came Śankaṇ, and from him
Sudarśan, fair in face and limb.
From beautiful Sudarśan came
Prince Agnivarṇa, bright as flame.
His son was Śíghraga, for speed
Unmatched; and Maru was his seed.
Praśuśruka was Maru's child:
His son was Ambarísha styled.

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[1] This is another fanciful derivation, *Sa*—with, and *gara*—poison.

[2] *Purushádak* means a cannibal. First called *Kalmáshapáda* on account of his spotted feet he is said to have been turned into a cannibal for killing the son of Vaśishṭha.

Nahush was Ambarísha's heir,
The mighty lord of regions fair:
Nahush begot Yáyáti: he,
Nábhág of happy destiny.
Son of Nábhág was Aja: his,
The glorious Daśaratha is,
Whose noble children boast to be
Ráma and Lakshman, whom we see.
Thus do those kings of purest race
Their lineage from Ikshváku trace:
Their hero lives the right maintained,
Their lips with falsehood ne'er were stained.
In Ráma's and in Lakshman's name
Thy daughters as their wives I claim,
So shall in equal bands be tied
Each peerless youth with peerless bride.'

CANTO LXXI.

JANAK'S PEDIGREE.

Then to the saint supremely wise
King Janak spoke in suppliant guise:
'Deign, Hermit, with attentive ear,
My race's origin to hear.
When kings a daughter's hand bestow,
'Tis right their line and fame to show.
There was a king whose deeds and worth
Spread wide his name through heaven and earth,
Nimi, most virtuous e'en from youth,
The best of all who love the truth.
His son and heir was Mithi, and
His Janak, first who ruled this land.
He left a son Udávasu,
Blest with all virtues, good and true.
His son was Nandivardhan, dear
For pious heart and worth sincere.
His son Suketu, hero brave,
To Devarát existence gave.
King Devarát, a royal sage,
For virtue, glory of the age,
Begot Vrihadratha; and he
Begot, his worthy heir to be,
The splendid hero Mahabír
Who long in glory governed here.
His son was Sudhriti, a youth
Firm in his purpose, brave in sooth.
His son was Dhrisṭaketu, blest
With pious will and holy breast.

The fame of royal saint he won:
Haryaśva was his princely son.
Haryaśva's son was Maru, who
Begot Pratíndhak, wise and true.
Next Kírtiratha held the throne,
His son, for gentle virtues known.
Then followed Devamíḍha, then
Vibudh, Mahándhrak, kings of men.
Mahándhrak's son, of boundless might,
Was Kírtirát, who loved the right.
He passed away, a sainted king,
And Mahárómá following
To Swarṇarómá left the state.
Then Hraśvarómá, good and great,
Succeeded, and to him a pair
Of sons his royal consort bare.
Elder of these I boast to be:
Brave Kuśadhwaj is next to me.[1]
Me then, the elder of the twain,
My sire anointed here to reign.
He bade me tend my brother well,
Then to the forest went to dwell.
He sought the heavens, and I sustained
The burden as by law ordained,
And noble Kuśadhwaj, the peer
Of Gods, I ever held most dear.
Then came Sánkáśyá's mighty lord,
Sudhanvá, threatening siege and sword.
And bade me swift on him bestow

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[1] 'In the setting forth of these royal genealogies the Bengal recension varies but slightly from the Northern. The first six names of the genealogy of the Kings of Ayodhyá are partly theogonical and partly cosmogonical; the other names are no doubt in accordance with tradition and deserve the same amount of credence as the ancient traditional genealogies of other nations.' GORRESIO.

Śiva's incomparable bow,
And Sítá of the lotus eyes:
But I refused each peerless prize.
Then, host to host, we met the foes,
And fierce the din of battle rose.
Sudhanvá, foremost of his band,
Fell smitten by my single hand.
When thus Sánkáśyá's lord was slain,
I sanctified, as laws ordain,
My brother in his stead to reign.
Thus are we brothers, Saint most high,
The younger he, the elder I.
Now, mighty Sage, my spirit joys
To give these maidens to the boys.
Let Sítá be to Ráma tied,
And Urmilá be Lakshmaṇ's bride.
First give, O King, the gift of cows,
As dowry of each royal spouse,
Due offerings to the spirits pay,
And solemnize the wedding-day.
The moon to-night, O royal Sage,
In Maghá's[1] House takes harbourage;
On the third night his rays benign
In second Phálguní[2] will shine:
Be that the day, with prosperous fate,
The nuptial rites to celebrate.'

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[1] 'The tenth of the lunar asterisms, composed of five stars.

[2] There are two lunar asterisms of this name, one following the other immediately, forming the eleventh and twelfth of the lunar mansions.

CANTO LXXII.

THE GIFT OF KINE.

When royal Janak's words were done,
Joined with Vaśishṭha, Kuśik's son,
The mighty sage began his speech :
'No mind may scan, no thought can reach
The glories of Ikshváku's line,
Or, great Videha's King, of thine :
None in the whole wide world may vie
With them in fame and honours high.
Well matched, I ween, in holy bands,
These peerless pairs will join their hands.
But hear me as I speak once more :
Thy brother, skilled in duty's lore,
Has at his home a royal pair
Of daughters most divinely fair.
I for the hands of these sweet two
For Bharat and Śatrughna sue,
Both princes of heroic mould,
Wise, fair of form, and lofty-souled.
All Daśaratha's sons, I ween,
Own each young grace of form and mien :
Brave as the Gods are they, nor yield
To the great Lords the worlds who shield.
By these, good Prince of merits high,
Ikshváku's house with thine ally.'

The suit the holy sage preferred,
With willing ear the monarch heard :
Vaśishṭha's lips the counsel praised :
Then spake the king with hands upraised :

'Now blest indeed my race I deem,
Which your high will, O Saints supreme,
With Daśaratha's house unites
In bonds of love and marriage rites.
So be it done. My nieces twain
Let Bharat and Śatrughna gain,
And the four youths the selfsame day
Four maiden hands in theirs shall lay.
No day so lucky may compare,
For marriage—so the wise declare—
With the last day of Phálguní
Ruled by the genial deity.'
Then with raised hands in reverence due
To those arch-saints he spoke anew:
'I am your pupil, ever true:
To me high favour have ye shown;
Come, sit ye on my royal throne,
For Daśaratha rules these towers
E'en as Ayodhyá now is ours.
Do with your own whate'er ye choose:
Your lordship here will none refuse.'

He spoke, and to Videha's king
Thus Daśaratha, answering:
'Boundless your virtues, lords, whose sway
The realms of Mithilá obey.
With honouring care you entertain
Both holy sage and royal train.
Now to my house my steps I bend—
May blessings still on you attend—
Due offerings to the shades to pay.'
Thus spoke the king, and turned away:
To Janak first he bade adieu,
Then followed fast those holy two.
The monarch reached his palace where

The rites were paid with solemn care.
When the next sun began to shine
He rose and made his gift of kine.
A hundred thousand cows prepared
For each young prince the Bráhmans shared.
Each had her horns adorned with gold;
And duly was the number told,
Four hundred thousand, perfect tale:
Each brought a calf, each filled a pail.
And when that glorious task was o'er,
The monarch with his children four,
Showed like the Lord of Life divine
When the worlds' guardians round him shine.

CANTO LXXIII.

THE NUPTIALS.

On that same day that saw the king
His gift of kine distributing,
The lord of Kekaya's son, by name
Yudhájit, Bharat's uncle, came,
Asked of the monarch's health, and then
Addressed the reverend king of men:
'The lord of Kekaya's realm by me
Sends greeting, noble King, to thee:
Asks if the friends thy prayers would bless
Uninterrupted health possess.
Right anxious, mighty King, is he
My sister's princely boy to see.
For this I sought Ayodhyá fair
The message of my sire to bear.
There learning, O my liege, that thou
With sons and noble kinsmen now
Wast resting here, I sought the place
Longing to see my nephew's face'.
The king with kind observance cheered
His friend by tender ties endeared,
And every choicest honour pressed
Upon his honourable guest.
  That night with all his children spent,
At morn King Daśaratha went,
Behind Vaśishṭha and the rest,
To the fair ground for rites addressed.
Then when the lucky hour was nigh
Called Victory, of omen high,

Came Ráma, after vow and prayer
For nuptial bliss and fortune fair,
With the three youths in bright attire,
And stood beside his royal sire.
To Janak then Vaśishṭha sped,
And to Videha's monarch said:
'O King, Ayodhyá's ruler now
Has breathed the prayer and vowed the vow,
And with his sons expecting stands
The giver of the maidens' hands.
The giver and the taker both
Must ratify a mutual oath.
Perform the part for which we wait,
And rites of marriage celebrate.'

Skilled in the laws which Scriptures teach,
He answered thus Vaśishṭha's speech:
'O Saint, what warder bars the gate?
Whose bidding can the king await?
In one's own house what doubt is shown?
This kingdom, Sage, is all thine own.
E'en now the maidens may be found
Within the sacrificial ground:
Each vow is vowed and prayed each prayer,
And they, like fire, are shining there.
Here by the shrine my place I took
Expecting thee with eager look.
No bar the nuptial rites should stay:
What cause have we for more delay?'
When Janak's speech the monarch heard,
To sons and saints he gave the word,
And set them in the holy ring,
Then to Vaśishṭha spoke the king
Of Mithilá: 'O mighty Sage,
Now let this task thy care engage,

And lend thine aid and counsel wise
The nuptial rites to solemnize.'
  The saint Vaśishṭha gave assent,
And quickly to the task he went,
With Viśvámitra, nothing loth,
And Śatánanda aiding both.
Then, as the rules prescribe, they made
An altar in the midst, and laid
Fresh wreaths of fragrant flowers thereon.
The golden ladles round it shone;
And many a vase, which branches hid
Fixed in the perforated lid,
And sprays, and cups, and censers there
Stood filled with incense rich and rare;
Shell-bowls, and spoons, and salvers dressed
With gifts that greet the honoured guest;
Piles of parched rice some dishes bore,
Others with corn prepared ran o'er;
And holy grass was duly spread
In equal lengths, while prayers were said.
Next, chief of saints, Vaśishṭha came
And laid the offering in the flame.
Then by the hand King Janak drew
His Sítá, beautiful to view,
And placed her, bright in rich attire,
Ráma to face, before the fire,
Thus speaking to the royal boy
Who filled Kauśalyá's heart with joy:
'Here Sítá stands, my daughter fair,
The duties of thy life to share.
Take from her father, take thy bride;
Join hand to hand, and bliss betide!
A faithful wife, most blest is she,
And as thy shade will follow thee.'

Thus as he spoke the monarch threw
O'er her young limbs the holy dew,
While Gods and saints were heard to swell
The joyous cry, 'Tis well! 'Tis well!
His daughter Sítá thus bestowed,
O'er whom the sacred drops had flowed,
King Janak's heart with rapture glowed.
Then to Prince Lakshman thus he cried:
'Take Urmilá thine offered bride,
And clasp her hand within thine own
Ere yet the lucky hour be flown.'
Then to Prince Bharat thus cried he:
'Come, take the hand of Máṇḍaví.'
Then to Śatrughna: 'In thy grasp
The hand of Śrutakírti clasp.
Now, Raghu's sons, may all of you
Be gentle to your wives and true;
Keep well the vows you make to-day,
Nor let occasion slip away.'

King Janak's word the youths obeyed:
The maidens' hands in theirs they laid.
Then with their brides the princes went
With ordered steps and reverent
Round both the fire and Janak, round
The sages and the sacred ground.

A flowery flood of lucid dyes
In rain descended from the skies,
While with celestial voices blent
Sweet strains from many an instrument,
And the nymphs danced in joyous throng
Responsive to the minstrel's song.
Such signs of exultation they
Saw on the princes' wedding-day.
Still rang the heavenly music's sound

When Raghu's sons thrice circled round
The fire, each one with reverent head,
And homeward then their brides they led.
They to the sumptuous palace hied
That Janak's care had seen supplied.
The monarch girt with saint and peer
Still fondly gazing followed near.

CANTO LXXIV.

RÁMA WITH THE AXE.[1]

Soon as the night had reached its close
The hermit Viśvámitra rose;
To both the kings he bade adieu
And to the northern hill withdrew.
Ayodhyá's lord of high renown
Received farewell, and sought his town.
Then as each daughter left her bower
King Janak gave a splendid dower,
Rugs, precious silks, a warrior force,
Cars, elephants, and foot, and horse,
Divine to see and well arrayed;
And many a skilful tiring-maid,
And many a young and trusty slave
The father of the ladies gave.
Silver and coral, gold and pearls
He gave to his beloved girls.
These precious gifts the king bestowed
And sped his guest upon his road.
The lord of Mithilá's sweet town
Rode to his court and lighted down.
Ayodhyá's monarch, glad and gay,
Led by the seers pursued his way
With his dear sons of lofty mind:
The royal army marched behind.

[1] This is another Ráma, son of Jamadagni, called Paraśuráma, or Ráma with the axe, from the weapon which he carried. He was while he lived the terror of the Warrior caste, and his name recalls long and fierce struggles between the sacerdotal and military orders, in which the latter suffered severely at the hands of their implacable enemy.

As on he fared the voice he heard
Around of many a dismal bird,
And every beast in wild affright
Began to hurry to the right.
The monarch to Vaśishṭha cried:
'What do these evil signs betide?
Why do the beasts in terror fly,
And birds of evil omen cry?
What is it shakes my heart with dread?
Why is my soul disquieted?'
  Soon as he heard, the mighty saint
Thus answered Daśaratha's plaint
In sweetest tone: 'Now, Monarch, mark,
And learn from me the meaning dark.
The voices of the birds of air
Great peril to the host declare:
The moving beasts the dread allay,
So drive thy whelming fear away.'
  As he and Daśaratha spoke
A tempest from the welkin broke,
That shook the spacious earth amain
And hurled high trees upon the plain.
The sun grew dark with murky cloud,
And o'er the skies was cast a shroud,
While o'er the army, faint with dread,
A veil of dust and ashes spread.
King, princes, saints their sense retained,
Fear-stupified the rest remained.
At length, their wits returning, all
Beneath the gloom and ashy pall
Saw Jamadagni's son with dread,
His long hair twisted round his head,
Who, sprung from Bhrigu, loved to beat
The proudest kings beneath his feet.

Firm as Kailása's hill he showed,
Fierce as the fire of doom he glowed.
His axe upon his shoulder lay,
His bow was ready for the fray,
With thirsty arrows wont to fly
Like lightnings from the angry sky.
A long keen arrow forth he drew,
Invincible like those which flew
From Siva's ever-conquering bow
And Tripura in death laid low.

When his wild form, that struck with awe,
Fearful as ravening flame, they saw,
Vaśishṭha and the saints whose care
Was sacrifice and muttered prayer,
Drew close together, each to each,
And questioned thus with bated speech:
'Indignant at his father's fate
Will he on warriors vent his hate,
The slayers of his father slay,
And sweep the loathed race away?
But when of old his fury raged
Seas of their blood his wrath assuaged:
So doubtless now he has not planned
To slay all warriors in the land.'

Then with a gift the saints drew near
To Bhrigu's son whose look was fear,
And, Ráma! Ráma! soft they cried.
The gift he took, no word replied.
Then Bhrigu's son his silence broke,
And thus to Ráma Ráma spoke:

CANTO LXXV.

THE PARLE.

'Heroic Ráma, men proclaim
The marvels of thy matchless fame,
And I from loud-voiced rumour know
Thy exploit of the broken bow,
Yea, bent and broken, mighty Chief,
A feat most wondrous, past belief.
Stirred by thy fame thy face I sought :
A peerless bow I too have brought.
This mighty weapon, strong and dire,
Great Jamadagni owned, my sire.
Draw with its shaft my father's bow,
And thus thy might, O Ráma, show.
This proof of prowess let me see—
The weapon bent and drawn by thee ;
Then single fight our strength shall try,
And this shall raise thy glory high.'

King Daśaratha heard with dread
The boastful speech, and thus he said ;
Raising his hands in suppliant guise,
With pallid cheek and timid eyes :
'Forgetful of the bloody feud
Ascetic toils hast thou pursued ;
Then, Bráhman, let my children be
Untroubled and from danger free.
Sprung of the race of Bhrigu, who
Read holy lore, to vows most true,
Thou swarest to the Thousand-eyed

And thy fierce axe was cast aside.
Thou turnedst to thy rites away
Leaving the earth to Kaśyap's sway,
And wentest far a grove to seek
Beneath Mahendra's[1] mountain peak.
Now, mighty Hermit, art thou here
To slay us all with doom severe?
For if alone my Ráma fall,
We share his fate and perish all.'

As thus the aged sire complained
The mighty chief no answer deigned:
To Ráma only thus he cried:
'Two bows, the Heavenly Artist's pride,
Celestial, peerless, vast, and strong,
By all the worlds were honoured long.
One to the Three-eyed God[2] was given,
By glory to the conflict driven,
Thus armed fierce Tripura he slew:
And then by thee 'twas burst in two.
The second bow, which few may brave,
The highest Gods to Vishṇu gave.
This bow I hold: before it fall
The foeman's fenced tower and wall.
Then prayed the Gods the Sire Most High
By some unerring proof to try

---

[1] 'The author of the *Raghuvanśa* places the mountain Mahendra in the territory of the king of the Kalingans, whose palace commanded a view of the ocean. It is well known that the country along the coast to the south of the mouths of the Ganges was the seat of this people. Hence it may be suspected that this Mahendra is what Pliny calls "promontorium Calingon." The modern name *Cape Palmyras,* from the palmyras (Borassus flabelliformis) which abound there agrees remarkably with the description of the poet who speaks of the groves of these trees. *Raghuvanśa,* VI. 51.'

SCHLEGEL.

[2] Śiva.

Were praise for might Lord Vishṇu's due,
Or his whose Neck is stained with Blue.[1]
The mighty Sire their wishes knew,
And he whose lips are ever true
Caused the two Gods to meet as foes.
Then fierce the rage of battle rose:
Bristled in dread each starting hair
As Śiva strove with Vishṇu there.
But Vishṇu raised his voice amain,
And Śiva's bowstring twanged in vain;
Its master of the Three bright Eyes
Stood fixt in fury and surprise.
Then all the dwellers in the sky,
Minstrel, and saint, and God drew nigh,
And prayed them that the strife might cease,
And the great rivals met in peace.
'Twas seen how Śiva's bow had failed
Unnerved, when Vishṇu's might assailed,
And Gods and heavenly sages thence
To Vishṇu gave preëminence.
Then glorious Śiva in his rage
Gave it to Devarát the sage
Who ruled Videha's fertile land,
To pass it down from hand to hand.
But this my bow, whose shafts smite down
The foeman's fenced tower and town,
To great Richíka Vishṇu lent
To be a pledge and ornament.
Then Jamadagni, Bráhman dread,
My sire, the bow inherited.
But Arjun stooped to treachery vile
And slew my noble sire by guile,
Whose penance awful strength had gained,

---

[1] Śiva, God of the Azure Neck.

Whose hand the God-given bow retained.
I heard indignant how he fell
By mournful fate, too sad to tell.
My vengeful fury since that time
Scourges all Warriors for the crime.
As generations spring to life
I war them down in endless strife.
All earth I brought beneath my sway,
And gave it for his meed and pay
To holy Kaśyap, when of yore
The rites performed by him were o'er.
Then to Mahendra's hill I turned
Strong in the strength that penance earned,
And toiled upon his lofty head
By Gods immortal visited.
The breaking of the bow I knew
From startled Gods conversing, through
The airy regions, of thy deed,
And hither came with swiftest speed.
Now, for thy Warrior's honour sake,
This best of bows, O Ráma, take:
This, owned by Vishṇu's self of old,
My sire and grandsire loved to hold.
Drawn to its head upon the string
One town-destroying arrow bring;
If this thou can, O hero, I
In single fight thy strength will try.'

CANTO LXXVI.

DEBARRED FROM HEAVEN.

The haughty challenge, undeterred
The son of Daśaratha heard,
And cried, while reverence for his sire
Checked the full torrent of his ire :
'Before this day have I been told
The deed that stained thy hands of old.
But pity bids my soul forget :
Thy father, murdered, claimed the debt.
My strength, O Chief, thou deemest slight,
Too feeble for a Warrior's might.
Now will I show thy wondering eyes
The prowess which they dare despise.'

He hastened then with graceful ease
That mighty bow and shaft to seize.
His hand the weapon strung and swayed :
The arrow on the string was laid.
Then Jamadagni's son he eyed,
And thus in words of fury cried :
'Thou art a Bráhman, still to be
Most highly honoured, Chief, by me.
For Viśvámitra's sake beside
Shall reverence due be ne'er denied.
Though mine the power, I would not send
A dart at thee thy life to end.
But thy great power to wander free,
Which penance-rites have won for thee,
Or glorious worlds from thee to wrest,

Is the firm purpose of my breast.
And Vishṇu's dart which now I strain
Can ne'er be shot to fall in vain:
It strikes the mighty, and it stuns
The madness of the haughty ones.'

Then Gods, and saints, and heavenly choir
Preceded by the General Sire,
Met in the air and gazed below
On Ráma with that wondrous bow.
Nymph, minstrel, angel, all were there,
Snake-God, and spirit of the air,
Giant, and bard, and gryphon, met,
Their eyes upon the marvel set.
In senseless hush the world was chained
While Ráma's hand the bow retained.
And Jamadagni's son amazed
And powerless on the hero gazed.
Then when his swelling heart had shrunk,
And his proud strength in torpor sunk,
Scarce his voice ventured, low and weak,
To Ráma lotus-eyed, to speak:
'When long ago I gave away
The whole broad land to Kaśyap's sway,
He charged me never to remain
Within the limits of his reign.
Obedient to my guide's behest
On earth by night I never rest.
My choice is made. I will not dim
Mine honour and be false to him.
So, son of Raghu, leave me still
The power to wander where I will,
And swifter than the thought my flight
Shall place me on Mahendra's height.
My mansions of eternal joy,

By penance won, thou mayst destroy.
My path to these thy shaft may stay.
Now to the work! No more delay!
I know thee Lord of Gods; I know
Thy changeless might laid Madhu low.
All other hands would surely fail
To bend this bow. All hail! all hail!
See! all the Gods have left the skies
To bend on thee their eager eyes,
With whose achievements none compete,
Whose arm in war no God can meet.
No shame is mine, I ween, for thou,
Lord of the Worlds, hast dimmed my brow.
Now, pious Ráma, 'tis thy part
To shoot afar that glorious dart:
I, when the fatal shaft is shot,
Will seek that hill and tarry not.'

He ceased. The wondrous arrow flew,
And Jamadagni's offspring knew
Those glorious worlds to him were barred,
Once gained by penance long and hard.
Then straight the airy quarters cleared,
And the mid regions bright appeared,
While Gods and saints unnumbered praised
Ráma, the mighty bow who raised.
And Jamadagni's son, o'erawed,
Extolled his name with highest laud,
With reverent steps around him strode,
Then hastened on his airy road.
Far from the sight of all he fled,
And rested on Mahendra's head.

CANTO LXXVII.

*BHARAT'S DEPARTURE.**

Then Ráma with a cheerful mind
The bow to Varuṇ's hand resigned.
Due reverence to the saints he paid,
And thus addressed his sire dismayed:
'As Bhrigu's son is far from view,
Now let the host its march pursue,
And to Ayodhyá's town proceed
In four-fold bands, with thee to lead.'
King Daśaratha thus addressed
His lips to Ráma's forehead pressed,
And held him to his aged breast.
Rejoiced in sooth was he to know
That Bhrigu's son had parted so,
And hailed a second life begun
For him and his victorious son.
He urged the host to speed renewed,
And soon Ayodhyá's gates he viewed.
High o'er the roofs gay pennons played;
Tabour and drum loud music made;
Fresh water cooled the royal road,
And flowers in bright profusion glowed.
Glad crowds with garlands thronged the ways
Rejoicing on their king to gaze,
And all the town was bright and gay
Exulting in the festive day.
People and Bráhmans flocked to meet
Their monarch ere he gained the street.
The glorious king amid the throng

Rode with his glorious sons along,
And passed within his dear abode
That like Himálaya's mountain showed.
And there Kauśalyá, noble queen,
Sumitrá with her lovely mien,
Kaikeyí of the dainty waist,
And other dames his bowers who graced,
Stood in the palace side by side,
And welcomed home each youthful bride:
Fair Sítá, lofty-fated dame,
Urmilá of the glorious fame,
And Kuśadhwaja's children fair,
With joyous greeting and with prayer,
As all in linen robes arrayed
With offerings at the altars prayed.
Due reverence paid to Gods above,
Each princess gave her soul to love,
And hidden in her inmost bower
Passed with her lord each blissful hour.
The royal youths, of spirit high,
With whom in valour none could vie,
Lived each within his palace bounds
Bright as Kuvera's pleasure-grounds,
With riches, troops of faithful friends,
And bliss that wedded life attends:
Brave princes, trained in warlike skill,
And duteous to their father's will.
At length the monarch called one morn
Prince Bharat, of Kaikeyí born,
And cried: 'My son, within our gates
Lord Yudhájit thine uncle waits.
The son of Kekaya's king is he,
And came, my child, to summon thee.'

Then Bharat for the road prepared,

And with Śatrughna forth he fared.
First to his sire he bade adieu,
Brave Ráma, and his mothers too.
Lord Yudhájit with joyful pride
Went forth, the brothers by his side,
And reached the city where he dwelt :
And mighty joy his father felt.

Ráma and Lakshmaṇ honoured still
Their godlike sire with duteous will.
Two constant guides for Ráma stood,
His father's wish, the people's good.
Attentive to the general weal
He thought and wrought to please and heal.
His mothers too he strove to please
With love and sonly courtesies.
At every time, in every spot,
His holy guides he ne'er forgot.
So for his virtues kind and true
Dearer and dearer Ráma grew
To Daśaratha, Bráhmans, all
In town and country, great and small.
And Ráma by his darling's side
Saw many a blissful season glide,
Lodged in her soul, each thought on her,
Lover, and friend, and worshipper.
He loved her for his father's voice
Had given her and approved the choice :
He loved her for each charm she wore
And her sweet virtues more and more.
So he her lord and second life
Dwelt in the bosom of his wife,
In double form, that, e'en apart,
Each heart could commune free with heart.
Still grew that child of Janak's race,

More goddess-fair in form and face,
The loveliest wife that e'er was seen,
In mortal mould sweet Beauty's Queen.
Then shone the son Kauśalyá bore,
With this bright dame allied,
Like Vishṇu whom the Gods adore,
With Lakshmí by his side.

BOOK II.

CANTO I.

THE HEIR APPARENT.

So Bharat to his grandsire went
Obedient to the message sent,
And for his fond companion chose
Śatrughna slayer of his foes.[1]
There Bharat for a time remained
With love and honour entertained,
King Aśvapati's constant care,
Beloved as a son and heir.
Yet ever, as they lived at ease,
While all around combined to please,
The aged sire they left behind
Was present to each hero's mind.
Nor could the king's fond memory stray
From his brave children far away,
Dear Bharat and Śatrughna dear,
Each Varuṇ's match or Indra's peer.

To all the princes, young and brave,
His soul with fond affection clave;
Around his loving heart they clung
Like arms from his own body sprung.[2]

[1] Śatrughna means slayer of foes, and the word is repeated as an intensive epithet.

[2] Alluding to the images of Vishṇu, which have four arms, the four princes being portions of the substance of that God.

But best and noblest of the four,
Good as the God whom all adore,
Lord of all virtues, undefiled,
His darling was his eldest child.
For he was beautiful and strong,
From envy free, the foe of wrong,
With all his father's virtues blest,
And peerless in the world confessed.
With placid soul he softly spoke:
No harsh reply could taunts provoke.
He ever loved the good and sage
Revered for virtue and for age,
And when his martial tasks were o'er
Sate listening to their peaceful lore.
Wise, modest, pure, he honoured eld,
His lips from lying tales withheld;
Due reverence to the Bráhmans gave,
And ruled each passion like a slave.
Most tender, prompt at duty's call,
Loved by all men he loved them all.
Proud of the duties of his race,
With spirit meet for Warrior's place,
He strove to win by glorious deed,
Throned with the Gods, a priceless meed.
With him in speech and quick reply
Vrihaspati might hardly vie,
But never would his accents flow
For evil or for empty show.
In art and science duly trained,
His student vow he well maintained;
He learnt the lore for princes fit,
The Vedas and their Holy Writ,
And with his well-drawn bow at last
His mighty father's fame surpassed.

Of birth exalted, truthful, just,
With vigorous hand, with noble trust,
Well taught by aged twice-born men
Who gain and right could clearly ken,
Full well the claims and bounds he knew
Of duty, gain, and pleasure too:
Of memory keen, of ready tact,
In civil business prompt to act.
Reserved, his features ne'er disclosed
What counsel in his heart reposed.
All idle rage and mirth controlled,
He knew the times to give and hold.
Firm in his faith, of steadfast will,
He sought no wrong, he spoke no ill:
Not rashly swift, not idly slow,
His faults and others' keen to know.
Each merit, by his subtle sense,
He matched with proper recompense.
He knew the means that wealth provide,
And with keen eye expense could guide.
Wild elephants could he reclaim,
And mettled steeds could mount and tame.
No arm like his the bow could wield,
Or drive the chariot to the field.
Skilled to attack, to deal the blow,
Or lead a host against the foe:
Yea, e'en infuriate Gods would fear
To meet his arm in full career.
As the great sun in noontide blaze
Is glorious with his world of rays,
So Ráma with these virtues shone
Which all men loved to gaze upon.

The aged monarch fain would rest,
And said within his weary breast,

'Oh that I might, while living yet,
My Ráma o'er the kingdom set,
And see, before my course be run,
The hallowed drops anoint my son;
See all this spacious land obey,
From side to side, my first-born's sway,
And then, my life and joy complete,
Obtain in heaven a blissful seat!'
In him the monarch saw combined
The fairest form, the noblest mind,
And counselled how his son might share
The throne with him as Regent Heir.
For fearful signs in earth and sky,
And weakness warned him death was nigh:
But Ráma to the world endeared
By every grace his bosom cheered,
The moon of every eye, whose ray
Drove all his grief and fear away.
So duty urged that hour to seize,
Himself, his realm, to bless and please.
From town and country, far and near,
He summoned people, prince, and peer.
To each he gave a meet abode,
And honoured all and gifts bestowed.
Then, splendid in his king's attire,
He viewed them, as the general Sire,
In glory of a God arrayed,
Looks on the creatures he has made.
But Kekaya's king he called not then
For haste, nor Janak lord of men;
For after to each royal friend
The joyful tidings he would send.
Mid crowds from distant countries met
The king upon his throne was set;

Then honoured by the people, all
The rulers thronged into the hall.
On thrones assigned, each king in place
Looked silent on the monarch's face.
  Then girt by lords of high renown
  And throngs from hamlet and from town
    He showed in regal pride,
  As, honoured by the radiant band
  Of blessed Gods that round him stand,
    Lord Indra, Thousand-eyed.

CANTO II.

THE PEOPLE'S SPEECH.

Then to the full assembly bowed
The monarch, and addressed the crowd
With gracious speech, in accents loud
As heavenly drum or thunder-cloud:
'Needs not to you who know declare
How ever with paternal care
My fathers of Ikshváku's line
Have ruled the realm which now is mine.
I too have taught my feet to tread
The pathway of the mighty dead,
And with fond care that never slept
Have, as I could, my people kept.
So toiling still, and ne'er remiss
For all my people's weal and bliss,
Beneath the white umbrella's[1] shade,
Old age is come and strength decayed.
Thousands of years have o'er me flown,
And generations round me grown
And passed away. I crave at length
Repose and ease for broken strength.
Feeble and worn I scarce can bear
The ruler's toil, the judge's care,
With royal dignity, a weight
That tries the young and temperate.
I long to rest, my labour done,
And in my place to set my son,
If to the twice-born gathered here

[1] Chief of the insignia of imperial dignity.

My counsel wise and good appear.
For greater gifts than mine adorn
Ráma my son, my eldest-born.
Like Indra brave, before him fall
The foeman's cities, tower and wall.
Him, prince of men for power and might,
The best maintainer of the right,
Fair as the moon when nothing bars
His glory close to Pushya's stars,
Him, with to-morrow's light I fain
Would throne the consort of my reign.
A worthy lord for you, I ween,
Marked as her own by Fortune's Queen.
The triple world itself would be
Well ruled by such a king as he.
To such high bliss and happy fate
Will I the country dedicate,
And my sad heart will cease to grieve
If he the precious charge receive.
Thus is my careful plan matured,
Thus for myself is rest secured;
Lieges, approve the words I say,
Or point ye out some wiser way.
Devise your prudent plan. My mind
Is fondly to this thought inclined,
But men by keen debating move
Some middle course which all approve.'

The monarch ceased. In answer came
The joyous princes' glad acclaim.
So peacocks in the rain rejoice
And hail the cloud with lifted voice.
Murmurs of joy from thousands round
Shook the high palace with the sound.
Then when the gathered throng had learned

His will who right and gain discerned,
Peasant and townsman, priest and chief,
All met in consultation brief,
And soon agreed with one accord
Gave answer to their sovereign lord:
'King of the land, we know thee old:
Thousands of years have o'er thee rolled.
Ráma thy son, we pray, anoint,
And at thy side his place appoint.
Our gallant prince, so brave and strong,
Riding in royal state along,
Our eyes with joyful pride will see
Screened by the shade that shelters thee.'
Then spoke the king again, as though
Their hearts' true wish he sought to know:
'These prayers for Ráma's rule suggest
One question to my doubting breast.
This thing, I pray, with truth explain:
Why would ye, while I justly reign,
That he, mine eldest son, should bear
His part with me as ruling heir?'
Then all the people made reply,
Peasant and townsman, low and high:
'Each noblest gift of form and mind,
O Monarch, in thy son we find.
Do thou the godlike virtues hear
Which Ráma to our hearts endear.
So richly blest with graces, none
In all the earth excels thy son:
Nay, who to match with him may claim
In truth, in justice, and in fame?
True to his promise, gentle, kind,
Unenvious, of grateful mind,
Versed in the law and firm of soul,

He keeps each sense with strict control.
With duteous care he loves to sit
By Bráhmans skilled in Holy Writ.
Hence brightest glory, ne'er to end,
And matchless fame his youth attend.
Skilled in the use of spear and shield,
And arms which heavenly warriors wield,
Supreme in war, unconquered yet
By man, fiend, God in battle met,
Whene'er in pomp of war he goes
'Gainst town or city of the foes,
He ever comes with Lakshmaṇ back
Victorious from the fierce attack.
Returning homeward from afar
Borne on his elephant or car,
He ever to the townsmen bends
And greets them as beloved friends,
Asks how each son, each servant thrives,
How fare our pupils, offerings, wives;
And like a father bids us tell,
Each for himself, that all is well.
If pain or grief the city tries
His heart is swift to sympathize.
When festive scenes our thoughts employ
He like a father shares the joy.
High is the fate, O King, that gave
Thy Ráma born to bless and save,
With filial virtues fair and mild
Like Kaśyap old Maríchi's child.
Hence to the kingdom's distant ends
One general prayer for him ascends.
Each man in town and country prays
For Ráma's strength, health, length of days.
With hearts sincere, their wish the same,

The tender girl, the aged dame,
Subject and stranger, peasant, hind,
One thought impressed on every mind,
At evening and at dawning day
To all the Gods for Ráma pray.
Do thou, O King, of grace comply,
And hear the people's longing cry,
And let us on the throne by thee
The lotus-tinted Ráma see.
O thou who givest boons, attend;
A gracious ear, O Monarch, lend
And for our weal install,
Consenting to our earnest prayer,
Thy godlike Ráma Regent Heir,
Who seeks the good of all.'

CANTO III.

DAŚARATHA'S PRECEPTS.

The monarch with the prayer complied
Of suppliant hands, on every side
Uplifted like a lotus-bed :
And then these gracious words he said :
'Great joy and mighty fame are mine
Because your loving hearts incline,
In full assembly clearly shown,
To place my Ráma on the throne.'
Then to Vaśishṭha, standing near,
And Vámadeva loud and clear
The monarch spoke that all might hear :
''Tis pure and lovely Chaitra now
When flowers are sweet on every bough,
All needful things with haste prepare
That Ráma be appointed heir.'
Then burst the people's rapture out
In loud acclaim and joyful shout ;
And when the tumult slowly ceased
The king addressed the holy priest :
'Give order, Saint, with watchful heed
For what the coming rite will need.
This day let all things ready wait
Mine eldest son to consecrate.'
Best of all men of second birth
Vaśishṭha heard the lord of earth,
And gave commandment to the bands
Of servitors with lifted hands
Who waited on their master's eye :

'Now by to-morrow's dawn supply
Rich gold and herbs and gems of price
And offerings for the sacrifice,
Wreaths of white flowers and roasted rice,
And oil and honey, separate;
New garments and a car of state,
An elephant with lucky signs,
A fourfold host in ordered lines,
The white umbrella, and a pair
Of chowries,[1] and a banner fair;
A hundred vases, row on row,
To shine like fire in splendid glow,
A tiger's mighty skin, a bull
With gilded horns most beautiful.
All these, at dawn of coming day,
Around the royal shrine array,
Where burns the fire's undying ray.
Each palace door, each city gate
With wreaths of sandal decorate,
And with the garlands' fragrant scent
Let clouds of incense-smoke be blent.
Let food of noble kind and taste
Be for a hundred thousand placed;
Fresh curds with streams of milk bedewed
To feed the Bráhman multitude.
With care be all their wants supplied,
And mid the twice-born chiefs divide
Rich largess, with the early morn,
And oil and curds and roasted corn.
Soon as the sun has shown his light
Pronounce the prayer to bless the rite,
And then be all the Bráhmans called
And in their ordered seats installed.

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[1] Whisks, usually made of the long tails of the Yak.

Let all musicians skilled to play,
And dancing-girls in bright array
Stand ready in the second ring
Within the palace of the king.
Each honoured tree, each holy shrine
With leaves and flowery wreaths entwine,
And here and there beneath the shade
Be food prepared and presents laid.
Then brightly clad, in warlike guise,
With long swords girt upon their thighs,
Let soldiers of the nobler sort
March to the monarch's splendid court.'
  Thus gave command the twice-born pair
To active servants stationed there,
Then hastened to the king and said
That all their task was duly sped.
The king to wise Sumantra spake:
'Now quick, my lord, thy chariot take,
And hither with thy swiftest speed
My son, my noble Ráma lead.'
  Sumantra, ere the word was given,
His chariot from the court had driven,
And Ráma, best of all who ride
In cars, came sitting by his side.
The lords of men had hastened forth
From east and west and south and north,
Áryan and stranger, those who dwell
In the wild wood and on the fell,
And as the Gods to Indra, they
Showed honour to the king that day.
  Like Vásav, when his glorious form
Is circled by the Gods of storm,
Girt in his hall by kings he saw
His car-borne Ráma near him draw,

Like him who rules the minstrel band
Of heaven[1]; whose valour filled the land,
Of mighty arm and stately pride
Like a wild elephant in stride,
As fair in face as that fair stone
Dear to the moon, of moonbeams grown,[2]
With noble gifts and grace that took
The hearts of all, and chained each look,
World-cheering as the Lord of Rain
When floods relieve the parching plain.
The father, as the son came nigh,
Gazed with an ever-thirstier eye.
Sumantra helped the prince alight
From the good chariot passing bright,
And as to meet his sire he went
Followed behind him reverent.
Then Ráma clomb, the king to seek,
That terrace like Kailása's peak,
And reached the presence of the king,
Sumantra closely following.
Before his father's face he came,
Raised suppliant hands and named his name,[3]
And bowing lowly as is meet
Paid reverence to the monarch's feet.
But soon as Daśaratha viewed
The prince in humble attitude,
He raised him by the hand in haste
And his beloved son embraced,
Then signed him to a glorious throne,
Gem-decked and golden, near his own.

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[1] Chitraratha, King of the Gandharvas.

[2] The Chandrakánta or Moonstone, a sort of crystal supposed to be composed of congealed moonbeams.

[3] A customary mark of respect to a superior.

Then Ráma, best of Raghu's line,
Made the fair seat with lustre shine,
As when the orient sun upsprings
And his pure beam on Meru flings.
The glory flashed on roof and wall,
And with strange sheen suffused the hall,
As when the moon's pure rays are sent
Through autumn's star-lit firmament.
Then swelled his breast with joy and pride
As his dear son the father eyed,
E'en as himself more fair arrayed
In some clear mirror's face displayed.
The aged monarch gazed awhile,
Then thus addressed him with a smile,
As Kaśyap, whom the worlds revere,
Speaks for the Lord of Gods to hear:
'O thou of all my sons most dear,
In virtue best, thy father's peer,
Child of my consort first in place,
Mine equal in her pride of race,
Because the people's hearts are bound
To thee by graces in thee found,
Be thou in Pushya's favouring hour
Made partner of my royal power.
I know that thou by nature's bent
Both modest art and excellent,
But though thy gifts no counsel need
My love suggests the friendly rede.
Mine own dear son, be modest still,
And rule each sense with earnest will.
Keep thou the evils far away
That spring from love and anger's sway.
Thy noble course alike pursue
In secret as in open view,

And every nerve, the love to gain
Of ministers and subjects, strain.
The happy prince who sees with pride
His thriving people satisfied;
Whose arsenals with arms are stored,
And treasury with golden hoard,—
His friends rejoice as joyed the Blest
When Amrit crowned their eager quest.
So well, my child, thy course maintain,
And from all ill thy soul refrain.'

The friends of Ráma, gathered nigh,
Longing their lord to gratify,
Ran to Kauśalyá's bower to tell
The tidings that would please her well.
She, best of dames, with many a gem,
And gold, and kine rewarded them.

Then Ráma paid the reverence due,
Mounted the chariot, and withdrew,
And to his splendid dwelling drove
While crowds to show him honour strove.

The people, when the monarch's speech
Their willing ears had heard,
Were wild with joy as though on each
Great gifts had been conferred.
With meek and low salute each man
Turned to his home away,
And there with happy heart began
To all the Gods to pray.

CANTO IV.

RÁMA SUMMONED.

The crowd dismissed, to high debate
The monarch called his peers of state,
And, counsel from their lips obtained,
Firm in his will his will explained:
'To-morrow with auspicious ray
The moon in Pushya's sign will stay;
Be that the time with happy fate
Mine eldest son to consecrate,
And let my Ráma, lotus-eyed,
As Regent o'er the state preside.'
He sought, within, his charioteer,
And cried 'Again bring Ráma here.'
To Ráma's home Sumantra hied
Again to be the prince's guide.
His coming, told to Ráma's ear,
Suggested anxious doubt and fear.
He bade the messenger be led
That instant in, and thus he said:
'Tell me the cause, omitting naught,
Why thou again my house hast sought.'
The envoy answered: 'Prince, thy sire
Has sent thy presence to require.
My sender known, 'tis thine to say
If thou wilt go or answer nay.'
Then Ráma, when he heard his speech,
Made haste the royal court to reach.
Soon as the monarch was aware

His dearest son was waiting there,
Eager the parley to begin
He bade them lead the prince within.
Soon as he passed the chamber door
The hero bent him to the floor,
And at a distance from his seat
Raised his joined hands his sire to greet.
The monarch raised him from the ground,
And loving arms about him wound,
Then pointed to a seat that shone
With gold for him to rest upon.
'Aged am I,' he said, 'and worn;
In life's best joys my share have borne;
Rites to the Gods, in hundreds, paid,
With gifts of corn and largess made.
I yearned for sons: my life is blest
With them and thee of sons the best.
No debt to saints or Bráhamans, no,
Nor spirits, Gods, or self I owe.
One duty now remains alone,
To set thee on thy father's throne.
Now therefore, Ráma, hear my rede,
And mark my words with duteous heed:
This day the people's general voice
Elects thee king of love and choice,
And I, consenting to the prayer,
Will make thee, darling, Regent Heir.
Dread visions, each returning night,
With evil omens scare my sight.
Red meteors with a fearful sound
Shoot wildly downward to the ground,
While tempests lash the troubled air;
And they who read the stars declare
That, leagued against my natal sign,

Ráhu,[1] the Sun,[2] and Mars combine.
When portents dire as these appear,
A monarch's death or woe is near.
Then while my senses yet are spared,
And thought and will are unimpaired,
Be thou, my son, anointed king:
Men's fancy is a fickle thing.
To-day the moon, in order due,
Entered the sign Punarvasu;[3]
To-morrow, as the wise foretell,
In Pushya's favouring stars will dwell:
Then on the throne shalt thou be placed:
My soul, prophetic, counsels haste:
Thee, O my son, to-morrow I
As Regent Heir will sanctify.
So till the coming night be passed
Do thou and Sítá strictly fast:
From worldly thoughts thy soul refrain,
And couched on holy grass remain.
And let thy trusted lords attend
In careful watch upon their friend.
For, unexpected, check and bar
Our weightiest counsels often mar.
While Bharat too is far away
Making with royal kin his stay,
I deem the fittest time of all
Thee, chosen Regent, to install.
It may be Bharat still has stood

[1] Ráhu, the ascending node, is in mythology a demon with the tail of a dragon whose head was severed from his body by Vishṇu, but being immortal, the head and tail retained their separate existence and being transferred to the stellar sphere became the authors of eclipses; the first especially by endeavouring to swallow the sun and moon.

[2] In eclipse.

[3] The seventh of the lunar asterisms.

True to the counsels of the good,
Faithful to thee with tender trust,
With governed senses, pure and just.
But human minds, too well I know,
Will sudden changes undergo,
And by their constant deeds alone
The virtue of the good is shown.
Now, Ráma, go. My son, good night!
Fixt is to-morrow for the rite.'

Then Ráma paid the reverence due,
And quickly to his home withdrew.
He passed within, nor lingered there,
But sought his mother's mansion, where
The dame in linen robes arrayed
Devoutly in the chapel prayed
To Fortune's Queen, with utterance checked,
That she her Ráma would protect.
There was Sumitrá too, and there
Was Lakshmaṇ led by loving care;
And when the royal choice they knew
Sítá in haste was summoned too.
Absorbed, with half-shut eyes, the queen
Attended by the three was seen.
She knew that Pushya's lucky hour
Would raise her son to royal power,
So fixed with bated breath each thought
On God supreme, by all men sought.
To her, as thus she knelt and prayed,
Ráma drew near, due reverence paid,
And then to swell his mother's joy,
Thus spoke her own beloved boy:
'O mother dear, my sire's decree
Entrusts the people's weal to me.
To-morrow I, for so his will,

Anointed king, the throne shall fill.
The few last hours till night shall end
Sítá with me must fasting spend,
For so my father has decreed,
And holy priests with him agreed.
What vows soever thou mayst deem
My consecration's eve beseem,
Do thou, sweet mother, for my sake
And for beloved Sítá's make.'

When the glad news Kauśalyá heard,
So long desired, so long deferred,
While tears of joy her utterance broke,
In answer to her son she spoke:
'Long be thy life, my darling: now
Thy prostrate foes before thee bow.
Live long and with thy bright success
My friends and dear Sumitrá's bless.
Surely the stars were wondrous fair
When thee, sweet son, thy mother bare,
That thy good gifts such love inspire
And win the favour of thy sire.
With thee I travailed not in vain;
Those lotus eyes reward my pain,
And all the glory of the line
Of old Ikshváku will be thine.'

He smiled, and on his brother gazed
Who sate with reverent hands upraised,
And said: 'My brother, thou must be
Joint-ruler of this land with me.
My second self thou, Lakshman, art,
And in my fortune bearest part.
Be thine, Sumitrá's son, to know
The joys from regal power that flow.
My life itself, the monarch's seat,

For thy dear sake to me are sweet.'

Thus Ráma to his brother said,
To both his mothers[1] bowed his head,
And then with Sítá by his side
To his own house the hero hied.

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[1] Kauśalyá and Sumitrá.

CANTO V.

RÁMA'S FAST.

Then Saint Vaśishṭha to the king
Came ready at his summoning.
'Now go,' exclaimed the monarch, 'thou
Enriched by fervent rite and vow,
For Ráma and his wife ordain
The fast, that joy may bless his reign.'

The best of those who Scripture know
Said to the king, 'My lord, I go.'
To Ráma's house Vaśishṭha hied,
The hero's fast by rule to guide,
And skilled in sacred texts to tell
Each step to him instructed well.
Straight to Prince Ráma's high abode,
That like a cloud pale-tinted showed,
Borne in his priestly car he rode.
Two courts he passed, and in the third
He stayed his car. Then Ráma heard
The holy sage was come, and flew
To honour him with honour due.
He hastened to the car and lent
His hand to aid the priest's descent.
Then spoke Vaśishṭha words like these,
Pleased with his reverent courtesies,
With pleasant things his heart to cheer
Who best deserved glad news to hear:
'Prince, thou hast won thy father's grace,
And thine will be the Regent's place:

Now with thy Sítá, as is right,
In strictest fasting spend the night,
For when the morrow's dawn is fair
The king will consecrate his heir:
So Nahush,[1] as the wise relate,
Yayáti joyed to consecrate.'

Thus having said, Vaśishṭha next
Ordained the fast by rule and text,
For Ráma faithful to his vows
And the Videhan dame his spouse.
Then from the prince's house he hied
With courteous honours gratified.
Round Ráma gathered every friend
In pleasant talk a while to spend.
He bade good night to all at last,
And to his inner chamber passed.
Then Ráma's house shone bright and gay
With men and maids in glad array,
As in the morning some fair lake
When all her lotuses awake,
And every bird that loves the flood
Flits joyous round each opening bud.

Forth from the house Vaśishṭha drove,
That with the king's in splendour strove,
And all the royal street he viewed
Filled with a mighty multitude.
The eager concourse blocked each square,
Each road and lane and thoroughfare,
And joyous shouts on every side
Rose like the roar of Ocean's tide,
As streams of men together came
With loud huzza and glad acclaim.
The ways were watered, swept, and clean,

[1] A king of the Lunar race, and father of Yayáti.

And decked with flowers and garlands green.
And all Ayodhyá shone arrayed
With banners on the roofs that played.
Men, women, boys with eager eyes,
Expecting when the sun should rise,
Stood longing for the herald ray
Of Ráma's consecration-day,
To see, a source of joy to all,
The people-honoured festival.

The priest advancing slowly through
The mighty crowd he cleft in two,
Near to the monarch's palace drew.
He sought the terrace, by the stair,
Like a white cloud-peak high in air,
The reverend king of men to meet
Who sate upon his splendid seat:
Thus will Vrihaspati arise
To meet the monarch of the skies.
But when the king his coming knew,
He left his throne and near him drew.
Questioned by him Vaśishṭha said
That all his task was duly sped.
Then all who sate there, honouring
Vaśishṭha, rose as rose the king.
Vaśishṭha bade his lord adieu,
And all the peers, dismissed, withdrew.
Then as a royal lion seeks
His cave beneath the rocky peaks,
So to the chambers where abode
His consorts Daśaratha strode.
Full-thronged were those delightful bowers
With women richly dressed,
And splendid as the radiant towers
Where Indra loves to rest.

Then brighter flashed a thousand eyes
 With the light his presence lent,
As, when the moon begins to rise,
 The star-thronged firmament.

CANTO VI.

THE CITY DECORATED.

Then Ráma bathed in order due,
His mind from worldly thoughts withdrew,
And with his large-eyed wife besought
Náráyaṇ, as a votary ought.
Upon his head the brimming cup
Of holy oil he lifted up,
Then placed within the kindled fire
The offering to that heavenly Sire,
And as he sipped the remnant prayed
To Him for blessing and for aid.
Then, with still lips and tranquil mind
With his Videhan he reclined,
In Vishṇu's chapel, on a bed
Where holy grass was duly spread,
While still the prince's every thought
The God supreme, Náráyaṇ, sought.
One watch remained the night to close
When Ráma from his couch arose,
And bade the men and maids adorn
His palace for the solemn morn.
He heard the bards and heralds raise
Auspicious strains of joy and praise,
And breathed devout, with voice restrained,
The hymn for morning rites ordained;
Then, with his head in reverence bowed,
Praised Madhu's conquering foe aloud,
And, in pure linen robes arrayed,

The priests to raise their vóices prayed.
Obedient to the summons they
Proclaimed to all the festal day.
The Bráhmans' voices, deep and sweet,
Resounded through the crowded street,
And echoed through Ayodhyá went
By many a loud-toned instrument.
Then all the people joyed to hear
That Ráma with his consort dear
Had fasted till the morning light
In preparation for the rite.
Swiftly the joyful tidings through
Ayodhyá's crowded city flew,
And soon as dawn appeared, each man
To decorate the town began.
In all the temples bright and fair
As white clouds towering in the air,
In streets, and where the cross-ways met,
Where holy fig-trees had been set,
In open square, in sacred shade,
Where merchants' shops their wealth displayed,
On all the mansions of the great,
And householders of wealth and state,
Where'er the people loved to meet,
Where'er a tree adorned the street,
Gay banners floated to the wind,
And ribands round the staves were twined.
Then clear the singers' voices rang,
As, charming mind and ear, they sang.
Here players shone in bright attire,
There dancing-women swelled the quire.
Each with his friend had much to say
Of Ráma's consecration-day;
Yea, even children, as they played

At cottage doors beneath the shade.
The royal street with flowers was strown
Which loving hands in heaps had thrown,
And here and there rich incense lent
Its fragrance to the garland's scent;
And all was fresh and fair and bright
In honour of the coming rite.
With careful foresight to illume
With borrowed blaze the midnight gloom,
The crowds erected here and there
Trees in each street gay lamps to bear.
The city thus from side to side
In festal guise was beautified.
The people of the town who longed
To view the rite together thronged,
And filling every court and square
Praised the good king in converse there:
'Our high-souled king! He throws a grace
On old Ikshváku's royal race.
He feels his years' increasing weight,
And makes his son associate.
Great joy to us the choice will bring
Of Ráma for our lord and king.
The good and bad to him are known,
And long will he protect his own.
No pride his prudent breast may swell,
Most just, he loves his brothers well,
And to us all that love extends,
Cherished as brothers and as friends.
Long may our lord in life remain,
Good Daśaratha, free from stain,
By whose most gracious favour we
Ráma anointed king shall see.'

Such were the words the townsmen spoke,

Heard by the gathering countryfolk,
Who from the south, north, east, and west,
Stirred by the joyful tidings, pressed.
For by their eager longing led
To Ráma's consecration sped
The villagers from every side,
And filled Ayodhyá's city wide.
This way and that way strayed the crowd,
While rose a murmur long and loud,
As when the full moon floods the skies
And Ocean's waves with thunder rise.

That town, like Indra's city fair,
While peasants thronged her ways,
Tumultuous roared like Ocean, where
Each flood-born monster plays.

CANTO VII.

MANTHARÁ'S LAMENT.

It chanced a slave-born handmaid, bred
With Queen Kaikeyí, fancy-led,
Mounted the stair and stood upon
The terrace like the moon that shone.
Thence Manthará at ease surveyed
Ayodhyá to her eyes displayed,
Where water cooled the royal street,
Where heaps of flowers were fresh and sweet,
And costly flags and pennons hung
On roof and tower their shadow flung :
With covered ways prepared in haste,
And many an awning newly placed :
With sandal-scented streams bedewed,
Thronged by a new-bathed multitude :
Whose streets were full of Bráhman bands
With wreaths and sweetmeats in their hands.
Loud instruments their music raised,
And through the town, where'er she gazed,
The doors of temples glittered white,
And the maid marvelled at the sight.
Of Ráma's nurse who, standing by,
Gazed with a joy-expanded eye,
In robes of purest white attired,
The wondering damsel thus inquired :
'Does Ráma's mother give away
Rich largess to the crowds to-day,
On some dear object fondly bent,
Or blest with measureless content ?

What mean these signs of rare delight
On every side that meet my sight?
Say, will the king with joy elate
Some happy triumph celebrate?'

The nurse, with transport uncontrolled,
Her glad tale to the hump-back told:
'Our lord the king to-morrow morn
Will consecrate his eldest-born,
And raise, in Pushya's favouring hour,
Prince Ráma to the royal power.'
As thus the nurse her tidings spoke,
Rage in the hump-back's breast awoke.
Down from the terrace, like the head
Of high Kailása's hill, she sped.
Sin in her thoughts, her soul aflame,
Where Queen Kaikeyí slept, she came:
'Why sleepest thou?' she cried, 'arise.
Peril is near, unclose thine eyes.
Ah, heedless Queen, too blind to know
What floods of sin above thee flow!
Thy boasts of love and grace are o'er;
Thine is the show and nothing more.
His favour is an empty cheat,
A torrent dried by summer's heat.'

Thus by the artful maid addressed
In cruel words from raging breast,
The queen, sore troubled, spoke in turn:
'What evil news have I to learn?
That mournful eye, that altered cheek
Of sudden woe or danger speak.'

Such were the words Kaikeyí said.
Then Mantharà, her eyeballs red
With fury, skilled with treacherous art
To grieve yet more her lady's heart,

From Ráma, in her wicked hate,
Kaikeyí's love to alienate,
Upon her evil purpose bent
Began again most eloquent:
'Peril awaits thee swift and sure,
And utter woe defying cure;
King Daśaratha will create
Prince Ráma Heir Associate.
Plunged in the depths of wild despair,
My soul a prey to pain and care,
As though the flames consumed me, zeal
Has brought me for my lady's weal.
Thy grief, my Queen, is grief to me:
Thy gain my greatest gain would be.
Proud daughter of a princely line,
The rights of consort queen are thine.
How art thou, born of royal race,
Blind to the crimes that kings debase?
Thy lord is gracious, to deceive,
And flatters, but thy soul to grieve,
While thy pure heart that thinks no sin
Knows not the snares that hem thee in.
Thy husband's lips on thee bestow
Soft soothing words, an empty show:
The wealth, the substance, and the power
This day will be Kauśalyá's dower.
With crafty soul thy child he sends
To dwell among thy distant friends,
And, every rival far from sight,
To Ráma gives the power and might.
Ah me! for thou, unhappy dame,
Deluded by a husband's name,
With more than mother's love hast pressed
A serpent to thy heedless breast,

And cherished him who works thee woe,
No husband but a deadly foe.
For like a snake, unconscious Queen,
Or enemy who stabs unseen,
King Daśaratha all untrue
Has dealt with thee and Bharat too.
Ah, simple lady, long beguiled
By his soft words who falsely smiled!
Poor victim of the guileless breast,
A happier fate thou meritest.
For thee and thine destruction waits
When he Prince Ráma consecrates.
Up, lady, while there yet is time;
Preserve thyself, prevent the crime.
Up, from thy careless ease, and free
Thyself, O Queen, thy son, and me!'

Delighted at the words she said,
Kaikeyí lifted from the bed,
Like autumn's moon, her radiant head,
And joyous at the tidings gave
A jewel to the hump-back slave;
And as she gave the precious toy
She cried in her exceeding joy:
'Take this, dear maiden, for thy news
Most grateful to mine ear, and choose
What grace beside most fitly may
The welcome messenger repay.
I joy that Ráma gains the throne:
Kauśalyá's son is as mine own.'

CANTO VIII.

MANTHARÁ'S SPEECH.

The damsel's breast with fury burned :
She answered, as the gift she spurned :
'What time, O simple Queen, is this
For idle dreams of fancied bliss ?
Hast thou not sense thy state to know,
Engulfed in seas of whelming woe ?
Sick as I am with grief and pain
My lips can scarce a laugh restrain
To see thee hail with ill-timed joy
A peril mighty to destroy.
I mourn for one so fondly blind :
What woman of a prudent mind
Would welcome, e'en as thou hast done,
The lordship of a rival's son,
Rejoiced to find her secret foe
Empowered, like death, to launch the blow ?
I see that Ráma still must fear
Thy Bharat, to his throne too near.
Hence is my heart disquieted,
For those who fear are those we dread.
Lakshmaṇ, the mighty bow who draws,
With all his soul serves Ráma's cause ;
And chains as strong to Bharat bind
Śatrughna, with his heart and mind.
Now next to Ráma, lady fair,
Thy Bharat is the lawful heir ;
And far remote, I ween, the chance

That might the younger two advance.
Yes, Queen, 'tis Ráma that I dread,
Wise, prompt, in warlike science bred;
And oh, I tremble when I think
Of thy dear child on ruin's brink.
Blest with a lofty fate is she,
Kauśalyá; for her son will be
Placed, when the moon and Pushya meet,
By Bráhmans on the royal seat.
Thou as a slave in suppliant guise
Must wait upon Kauśalyá's eyes,
With all her wealth and bliss secured
And glorious from her foes assured.
Her slave with us who serve thee, thou
Wilt see thy son to Ráma bow,
And Sítá's friends exult o'er all,
While Bharat's wife shares Bharat's fall.'

As thus the maid in wrath complained,
Kaikeyí saw her heart was pained,
And answered eager in defence
Of Ráma's worth and excellence:
'Nay, Ráma born the monarch's heir,
By holy fathers trained with care,
Virtuous, grateful, pure, and true,
Claims royal sway as rightly due.
He, like a sire, will long defend
Each brother, minister, and friend.
Then why, O hump-back, art thou pained
To hear that he the throne has gained?
Be sure when Ráma's empire ends,
The kingdom to my son descends,
Who, when a hundred years are flown,
Shall sit upon his fathers' throne.
Why is thine heart thus sad to see

The joy that is and long shall be,
This fortune by possession sure
And hopes which we may count secure?
Dear as the darling son I bore
Is Ráma, yea, or even more.
Most duteous to Kauśalyá, he
Is yet more dutiful to me.
What though he rule, we need not fear:
His brethren to his soul are dear.
And if the throne Prince Ráma fill
Bharat will share the empire still.'

She ceased. The troubled damsel sighed
Sighs long and hot, and thus replied:
'What madness has possessed thy mind,
To warnings deaf, to dangers blind?
Canst thou not see the floods of woe
That threaten o'er thine head to flow?
First Ráma will the throne acquire,
Then Ráma's son succeed his sire,
While Bharat will neglected pine
Excluded from the royal line.
Not all his sons, O lady fair,
The kingdom of a monarch share:
All ruling when a sovereign dies
Wild tumult in the state would rise.
The eldest, be he good or ill,
Is ruler by the father's will.
Know, tender mother, that thy son
Without a friend and all undone,
Far from the joyous ease of home
An alien from his race will roam.
I sped to thee for whom I feel,
But thy fond heart mistakes my zeal.
Thy hand a present would bestow

Because thy rival triumphs so.
When Ráma once begins his sway
Without a foe his will to stay,
Thy darling Bharat he will drive
To distant lands if left alive.
By thee the child was sent away
Beneath his grandsire's roof to stay.
Even in stocks and stones perforce
Will friendship spring from intercourse.
The young Śatrughna too would go
With Bharat, for he loved him so.
As Lakshman still to Ráma cleaves,
He his dear Bharat never leaves.
There is an ancient tale they tell:
A tree the foresters would fell
Was saved by reeds that round it stood,
For love that sprang of neighbourhood.
So Lakshman Ráma will defend,
And each on each for aid depend.
Such fame on earth their friendship wins
As that which binds the Heavenly Twins.
And Ráma ne'er will purpose wrong
To Lakshman, for their love is strong.
But Bharat, Oh, of this be sure,
Must evil at his hands endure.
Come, Ráma from his home expel
An exile in the woods to dwell.
The plan, O Queen, which I advise
Secures thy weal if thou be wise.
So we and all thy kith and kin
Advantage from thy gain shall win.
Shall Bharat, meet for happier fate,
Born to endure his rival's hate,
With all his fortune ruined cower

And dread his brother's mightier power?
Up, Queen, to save thy son, arise;
Prostrate at Ráma's feet he lies.
So the proud elephant who leads
His trooping consorts through the reeds
Falls in the forest shade beneath
The lion's spring and murderous teeth.
Scorned by thee in thy bliss and pride
Kauśalyá was of old defied,
And will she now forbear to show
The vengeful rancour of a foe?
O Queen, thy darling is undone
When Ráma's hand has once begun
Ayodhyá's realm to sway.
Come, win the kingdom for thy child
And drive the alien to the wild
In banishment to-day.'

CANTO IX.

THE PLOT.

As fury lit Kaikeyí's eyes
She spoke with long and burning sighs:
'This day my son enthroned shall see,
And Ráma to the woods shall flee.
But tell me, damsel, if thou can,
A certain way, a skilful plan
That Bharat may the empire gain,
And Ráma's hopes be nursed in vain.'
The lady ceased. The wicked maid
The mandate of her queen obeyed,
And darkly plotting Ráma's fall
Responded to Kaikeyí's call.

'I will declare, do thou attend,
How Bharat may his throne ascend.
Dost thou forget what things befell?
Or dost thou feign, remembering well?
Or wouldst thou hear my tongue repeat
A story for thy need so meet?
Gay lady, if thy will be so,
Now hear the tale of long ago,
And when my tongue has done its part
Ponder the story in thine heart.
When Gods and demons fought of old,
Thy lord, with royal saints enrolled,
Sped to the war with thee to bring
His might to aid the Immortals' King.
Far to the southern land he sped

Where Dandak's mighty wilds are spread,
To Vaijayanta's city swayed
By Śambara, whose flag displayed
The hugest monster of the sea.
Lord of a hundred wiles was he;
With might which Gods could never blame
Against the King of Heaven he came.
Then raged the battle wild and dread,
And mortal warriors fought and bled;
The fiends by night with strength renewed
Charged, slew the sleeping multitude.
Thy lord, King Daśaratha, long
Stood fighting with the demon throng,
But long of arm, unmatched in strength,
Fell wounded by their darts at length.
Thy husband, senseless, by thine aid
Was from the battle field conveyed,
And wounded nigh to death thy lord
Was by thy care to health restored.
Well pleased the grateful monarch sware
To grant thy first and second prayer.
Thou for no favour then wouldst sue,
The gifts reserved for season due;
And he, thy high-souled lord, agreed
To give the boons when thou shouldst need.
Myself I knew not what befell,
But oft the tale have heard thee tell,
And close to thee in friendship knit
Deep in my heart have treasured it.
Remind thy husband of his oath,
Recall the boons and claim them both,
That Bharat on the throne be placed
With rites of consecration graced,
And Ráma to the woods be sent

For twice seven years of banishment.
Go, Queen, the mourner's chamber[1] seek,
With angry eye and burning cheek;
And with disordered robes and hair
On the cold earth lie prostrate there.
When the king comes still mournful lie,
Speak not a word nor meet his eye,
But let thy tears in torrents flow,
And lie enamoured of thy woe.
Well do I know thou long hast been,
And ever art, his darling queen.
For thy dear sake, O well-loved dame,
The mighty king would brave the flame,
But ne'er would anger thee, or brook
To meet his favourite's wrathful look.
Thy loving lord would even die
Thy fancy, Queen, to gratify,
And never could he arm his breast
To answer nay to thy request.
Listen and learn, O dull of sense,
Thine all-resistless influence.
Gems he will offer, pearls, and gold:
Refuse his gifts, be stern and cold.
Those proffered boons at length recall,
And claim them till he grants thee all.
And O my lady, high in bliss,
With heedful thought forget not this.
When from the ground his queen he lifts
And grants again the promised gifts,
Bind him with oaths he cannot break
And thy demands, unflinching, make,

---

[1] Literally *the chamber of wrath, a 'growlery,'* a small, dark, unfurnished room to which it seems, the wives and ladies of the king betook themselves when offended and sulky.

That Ráma travel to the wild
Five years and nine from home exiled,
And Bharat, best of all who reign,
The empire of the land obtain.
For when this term of years has fled
Over the banished Ráma's head
Thy royal son to vigour grown
And rooted firm will stand alone.
The king, I know, is well inclined,
And this the hour to move his mind.
Be bold: the threatened rite prevent,
And force the king from his intent.'

She ceased. So counselled to her bane
Disguised beneath a show of gain,
Kaikeyí in her joy and pride
To Manthará again replied:
'Thy sense I envy, prudent maid;
With sagest lore thy lips persuade.
No hump-back maid in all the earth,
For wise resolve, can match thy worth.
Thou art alone with constant zeal
Devoted to thy lady's weal.
Dear girl, without thy faithful aid
I had not marked the plot he laid.
Full of all guile and sin and spite
Misshapen hump-backs shock the sight:
But thou art fair and formed to please,
Bent like a lily by the breeze.
I look thee o'er with watchful eye,
And in thy frame no fault can spy;
The chest so deep, the waist so trim,
So round the lines of breast and limb.[1]

[1] In these four lines I do not translate faithfully, and I do not ventur[e] to follow Kaikeyí farther in her eulogy of the hump-back's charms.

Thy cheeks with moonlike beauty shine,
And the warm wealth of youth is thine.
Thy legs, my girl, are long and neat,
And somewhat long thy dainty feet,
While stepping out before my face
Thou seemest like a crane to pace.
The thousand wiles are in thy breast
Which Śambara the fiend possessed,
And countless others all thine own,
O damsel sage, to thee are known.
Thy very hump becomes thee too,
O thou whose face is fair to view,
For there reside in endless store
Plots, wizard wiles, and warrior lore.
A golden chain I'll round it fling
When Ráma's flight makes Bharat king:
Yea, polished links of finest gold,
When once the wished for prize I hold
With naught to fear and none to hate,
Thy hump, dear maid, shall decorate.
A golden frontlet wrought with care,
And precious jewels shalt thou wear:
Two lovely robes around thee fold,
And walk a Goddess to behold,
Bidding the moon himself compare
His beauty with a face so fair.
With scent of precious sandal sweet
Down to the nails upon thy feet,
First of the household thou shalt go
And pay with scorn each baffled foe.'

Kaikeyí's praise the damsel heard,
And thus again her lady stirred,
Who lay upon her beauteous bed
Like fire upon the altar fed:

'Dear Queen, they build the bridge in vain
When swollen streams are dry again.
Arise, thy glorious task complete,
And draw the king to thy retreat.'
The large-eyed lady left her bower
Exulting in her pride of power,
And with the hump-back sought the gloom
And silence of the mourner's room.
The string of priceless pearls that hung
Around her neck to earth she flung,
With all the wealth and lustre lent
By precious gem and ornament,
Then, listening to her slave's advice,
Lay, like a nymph from Paradise.
As on the ground her limbs she laid
Once more she cried unto the maid :
'Soon must thou to the monarch say
Kaikeyí's soul has past away,
Or, Ráma banished as we planned,
My son made king shall rule the land.
No more for gold and gems I care,
For brave attire or dainty fare.
If Ráma should the throne ascend,
That very hour my life will end.'
The royal lady wounded through
The bosom with the darts that flew
Launched from the hump-back's tongue,
Pressed both her hands upon her side,
And o'er and o'er again she cried
With wildering fury stung :
'Yes, it shall be thy task to tell
That I have hurried hence to dwell
In Yama's realms of woe,
Or happy Bharat shall be king,

And doomed to years of wandering
Kauśalyá's son shall go.
I heed not dainty viands now,
Fair wreaths of flowers to twine my brow,
Soft balm or precious scent:
My very life I count as naught,
Nothing on earth can claim my thought
But Ráma's banishment.'

She spoke these words of cruel ire;
Then, stripping off her gay attire,
The cold bare floor she pressed.
So, falling from her home on high,
Some lovely daughter of the sky
Upon the ground might rest.
With darkened brow and furious mien,
Stripped of her gems and wreath, the queen
In spotless beauty lay;
Like heaven obscured with gathering clouds,
When shades of midnight darkness shroud
Each star's expiring ray.

CANTO X.

DAŚARATHA'S SPEECH.

As Queen Kaikeyí thus obeyed
The sinful counsel of her maid
She sank upon the chamber floor,
As sinks in anguish, wounded sore,
An elephant beneath the smart
Of the wild hunter's venomed dart.
The lovely lady in her mind
Revolved the plot her maid designed,
And prompt the gain and risk to scan
She step by step approved the plan.
Misguided by the hump-back's guile
She pondered her resolve awhile,
As the fair path that bliss secured
The miserable lady lured.
Devoted to her queen, and swayed
By hopes of gain and bliss, the maid
Rejoiced, her lady's purpose known,
And deemed the prize she sought her own.
Then bent upon her purpose dire,
Kaikeyí, with her soul on fire,
Upon the floor lay, languid, down,
Her brows contracted in a frown.
The bright-hued wreath that bound her hair,
Chains, necklets, jewels rich and rare,
Stripped off by her own fingers lay
Spread on the ground in disarray,
And to the floor a lustre lent

As stars light up the firmament.
Thus prostrate in the mourner's cell,
In garb of woe the lady fell,
Her long hair in a single braid,
Like some fair nymph of heaven dismayed.[1]

The monarch, Ráma to install,
With thoughtful care had ordered all,
And now within his home withdrew,
Dismissing first his retinue.
Now all the town has heard, thought he,
What joyful rite the morn will see,
So turned he to her bower to cheer
With the glad news his darling's ear.
Majestic, as the Lord of Night,
When threatened by the Dragon's might,
Bursts radiant on the evening sky
Pale with the clouds that wander by,
So Daśaratha, great in fame,
To Queen Kaikeyí's palace came.
There parrots flew from tree to tree,
And gorgeous peacocks wandered free,
While ever and anon was heard
The note of some glad water-bird.
Here loitered dwarf and hump-backed maid,
There lute and lyre sweet music played.
Here, rich in blossom, creepers twined
O'er grots with wondrous art designed,
There Champac and Aśoka flowers
Hung glorious o'er the summer bowers,

---

[1] These verses are evidently an interpolation. They contain nothing that has not been already related: the words only are altered. As the whole poem could not be recited at once, the rhapsodists at the beginning of a fresh recitation would naturally remind their hearer of the events immediately preceding.

And mid the waving verdure rose
Gold, silver, ivory porticoes.
Through all the months in ceaseless store
The trees both fruit and blossom bore.
With many a lake the grounds were graced;
Seats, gold and silver, here were placed;
Here every viand wooed the taste.
It was a garden meet to vie
E'en with the home of Gods on high.
Within the mansion rich and vast
The mighty Daśaratha passed:
Not there was his beloved queen
On her fair couch reclining seen.
With love his eager pulses beat
For the dear wife he came to meet,
And in his blissful hopes deceived,
He sought his absent love and grieved.
For never had she missed the hour
Of meeting in her sumptuous bower,
And never had the king of men
Entered the empty room till then.
Still urged by love and anxious thought
News of his favourite queen he sought,
For never had his loving eyes
Found her or selfish or unwise.
Then spoke at length the warder maid,
With hands upraised and sore afraid:
'My Lord and King, the queen has sought
The mourner's cell with rage distraught.'

The words the warder maiden said
He heard with soul disquieted,
And thus as fiercer grief assailed,
His troubled senses wellnigh failed.
Consumed by torturing fires of grief

The king, the world's imperial chief,
His lady lying on the ground
In most unqueenly posture, found.
The aged king, all pure within,
Saw the young queen resolved on sin,
Low on the ground, his own sweet wife,
To him far dearer than his life,
Like some fair creeping plant uptorn,
Or like a maid of heaven forlorn,
A nymph of air or Goddess sent
From Swarga down in banishment.
As some wild elephant who tries
To soothe his consort as she lies
Struck by the hunter's venomed dart,
So the great king, disturbed in heart,
Strove with soft hand and fond caress
To soothe his darling queen's distress,
And in his love addressed with sighs
The lady of the lotus eyes:
'I know not, Queen, why thou shouldst be
Thus angered to the heart with me.
Say, who has slighted thee, or whence
Has come the cause of such offence
That in the dust thou liest low,
And rendest my fond heart with woe,
As if some goblin of the night
Had struck thee with a deadly blight,
And cast foul influence on her
Whose spells my loving bosom stir?
I have physicians famed for skill,
Each trained to cure some special ill:
My sweetest lady, tell thy pain,
And they shall make thee well again.
Whom, darling, wouldst thou punished see?

Or whom enriched with lordly fee?
Weep not, my lovely Queen, and stay
This grief that wears thy frame away.
Speak, and the guilty shall be freed,
The guiltless be condemned to bleed,
The poor enriched, the rich abased,
The low set high, the proud disgraced.
My lords and I thy will obey,
All slaves who own thy sovereign sway;
And I can ne'er my heart incline
To check in aught one wish of thine.
Now by my life I pray thee tell
The thoughts that in thy bosom dwell.
The power and might thou knowest well
Should from thy breast all doubt expel.
I swear by all my merit won,
Speak, and thy pleasure shall be done.
Far as the world's wide bounds extend
My glorious empire knows no end.
Mine are the tribes in eastern lands,
And those who dwell on Sindhu's sands:
Mine is Suráshṭra, far away,
Suvíra's realm admits my sway.
My hest the southern nations fear,
The Angas and the Vaṅgas hear.
And as lord paramount I reign
O'er Magadh and the Matsyas' plain,
Kośal, and Káśí's wide domain;[1]
All rich in treasures of the mine,
In golden corn, sheep, goats, and kine.
Choose what thou wilt, Kaikeyí, thence:
But tell me, O my darling, whence

[1] The *Śloka* or distich which I have been forced to expand into these nine lines is evidently spurious, but is found in all the commented MSS. which Schlegel consulted.

Arose thy grief, and it shall fly
Like hoar-frost when the sun is high.'

She, by his loving words consoled,
Longed her dire purpose to unfold,
And sought with sharper pangs to wring
The bosom of her lord the king.

CANTO XI.

THE QUEEN'S DEMAND.

To him enthralled by love, and blind,
Pierced by his darts who shakes the mind,[1]
Kaikeyí with remorseless breast
Her cruel purpose thus expressed:
'O King, no insult or neglect
Have I endured, or disrespect.
One wish I have, and fain would see
That longing granted, lord, by thee.
Now pledge thy word if thou incline
To listen to this prayer of mine,
Then I with confidence will speak,
And thou shalt hear the boon I seek.'

Ere she had ceased, the monarch fell
A victim to the lady's spell,
And to the deadly snare she set
Sprang, like a roebuck to the net.
Her lover raised her drooping head,
Smiled, playing with her hair, and said:
'Hast thou not learnt, wild dame, till now
That there is none so dear as thou
To me thy loving husband, save
My Ráma bravest of the brave?
By him my race's high-souled heir,
By him whom none can match, I swear,
Now speak the wish that on thee weighs:
By him whose right is length of days,
Whom if my fond paternal eye

[1] Manmatha, Mind-disturber, a name of Káma or Love.

Saw not one hour I needs must die,—
I swear by Ráma my dear son,
Speak, and thy bidding shall be done.
Speak, darling; if thou choose, request
To have the heart from out my breast:
Regard my words, sweet love, and name
The wish thy mind thinks fit to frame.
Nor let thy soul give way to doubt:
My power should drive suspicion out.
Yea, by my merits won I swear,
Speak, darling, I will grant thy prayer.'

The queen, ambitious, overjoyed
To see him by her plot decoyed,
More eager still her aims to reach,
Spoke her abominable speech:
'A boon thou grantest, nothing loth,
And swearest with repeated oath.
Now let the thirty Gods and three
My witnesses, with Indra, be.
Let sun and moon and planets hear,
Heaven, quarters, day and night, give ear.
The mighty world, the earth outspread,
With bards of heaven and demons dread;
The ghosts that walk in midnight shade,
And household Gods, our present aid,
And every being great and small
To hear and mark the oath I call.'

When thus the archer king was bound
With treacherous arts and oaths enwound,
She to her bounteous lord subdued
By blinding love, her speech renewed:
'Remember, King, that long-past day
Of Gods' and demons' battle fray,
And how thy foe in doubtful strife

Had nigh bereft thee of thy life.
Remember, it was only I
Preserved thee when about to die,
And thou for watchful love and care
Wouldst grant my first and second prayer.
Those offered boons, pledged with thee then,
I now demand, O King of men,
Of thee, O Monarch, good and just,
Whose righteous soul observes each trust.
If thou refuse thy promise sworn,
I die, despised, before the morn.
These rites in Ráma's name begun—
Transfer them, and enthrone my son.
The time is come to claim at last
That double boon of days long-past,
When Gods and demons met in fight,
And thou wouldst fain my care requite.
Now forth to Daṇḍak's forest drive
Thy Ráma for nine years and five,
And let him dwell a hermit there
With deerskin coat and matted hair.
Without a rival let my boy
The empire of the land enjoy,
And let mine eyes ere morning see
Thy Ráma to the forest flee.'

CANTO XII.

DAŚARATHA'S LAMENT.

The monarch, as Kaikeyí pressed
With cruel words her dire request,
Stood for a time absorbed in thought
While anguish in his bosom wrought.
'Does some wild dream my heart assail?
Or do my troubled senses fail?
Does some dire portent scare my view?
Or frenzy's stroke my soul subdue?'
Thus as he thought, his troubled mind
In doubt and dread no rest could find,
Distressed and trembling like a deer
Who sees the dreaded tigress near.
On the bare ground his limbs he threw,
And many a long deep sigh he drew,
Like a wild snake, with fury blind,
By charms within a ring confined.
Once as the monarch's fury woke,
'Shame on thee!' from his bosom broke,
And then in sense-bewildering pain
He fainted on the ground again.
At length, when slowly strength returned,
He answered as his eyeballs burned
With the wild fury of his ire
Consuming her, as 'twere, with fire:
'Fell traitress, thou whose thoughts design
The utter ruin of my line,
What wrong have I or Ráma done?
Speak murderess, speak thou wicked one.

Seeks he not evermore to please
Thee with all sonlike courtesies?
By what persuasion art thou led
To bring this ruin on his head?
Ah me, that fondly unaware
I brought thee home my life to snare,
Called daughter of a king, in truth
A serpent with a venomed tooth!
What fault can I pretend to find
In Ráma praised by all mankind,
That I my darling should forsake?
No, take my life, my glory take:
Let either queen be from me torn,
But not my well-loved eldest-born.
Him but to see is highest bliss,
And death itself his face to miss.
The world may sunless stand, the grain
May thrive without the genial rain,
But if my Ráma be not nigh
My spirit from its frame will fly.
Enough, thine impious plan forgo,
O thou who plottest sin and woe.
My head before thy feet, I kneel,
And pray thee some compassion feel.
O wicked dame, what can have led
Thy heart to dare a plot so dread?
Perchance thy purpose is to sound
The grace thy son with me has found;
Perchance the words that, all these days,
Thou still hast said in Ráma's praise,
Were only feigned, designed to cheer
With flatteries a father's ear.
Soon as thy grief, my Queen, I knew,
My bosom felt the anguish too.

In empty halls art thou possessed,
And subject to another's hest?
Now on Ikshváku's ancient race
Falls foul disorder and disgrace,
If thou, O Queen, whose heart so long
Has loved the good should choose the wrong.
Not once, O large-eyed dame, hast thou
Been guilty of offence till now,
Nor said a word to make me grieve,
Nor will I now thy sin believe.
With thee my Ráma used to hold
Like place with Bharat lofty-souled,
As thou so often, when the pair
Were children yet, wouldst fain declare.
And can thy righteous soul endure
That Ráma glorious, pious, pure,
Should to the distant wilds be sent
For fourteen years of banishment?
Yea, Ráma Bharat's self exceeds
In love to thee and sonlike deeds,
And, for deserving love of thee,
As Bharat, even so is he.
Who better than that chieftain may
Obedience, love, and honour pay,
Thy dignity with care protect,
Thy slightest word and wish respect?
Of all his countless followers none
Can breathe a word against my son;
Of many thousands not a dame
Can hint reproach or whisper blame.
All creatures feel the sweet control
Of Ráma's pure and gentle soul.
The pride of Manu's race, he binds
To him the people's grateful minds.

He wins the subjects with his truth,
The poor with gifts and gentle ruth,
His teachers with his docile will,
The foemen with his archer skill.
Truth, purity, religious zeal,
The hand to give, the heart to feel,
The love that ne'er betrays a friend,
The rectitude that naught can bend,
Knowledge, and meek obedience grace
My Ráma pride of Raghu's race.
Canst thou thine impious plot design
'Gainst him in whom these virtues shine,
Whose glory with the sages vies,
Peer of the Gods who rule the skies?
From him no harsh or bitter word
To pain one creature have I heard,
And how can I my son address,
For thee, with words of bitterness?
Have mercy, Queen: some pity show
To see my tears of anguish flow,
And listen to my mournful cry,
A poor old man who soon must die.
Whate'er this sea-girt land can boast
Of rich and rare from coast to coast,
To thee, my Queen, I give it all:
But O, thy deadly words recall:
O see, my suppliant hands entreat,
Again my lips are on thy feet;
Save Ráma, save my darling child,
Nor kill me with this sin defiled.'
He grovelled on the ground, and lay
To burning grief a senseless prey,
And ever and anon, assailed
By floods of woe he wept and wailed,

Striving with eager speed to gain
The margent of his sea of pain.

With fiercer words she fiercer yet
The hapless father's pleading met:
'O Monarch, if thy soul repent
Thy promise and thy free consent,
How wilt thou in the world maintain
Thy fame for truth unsmirched with stain?
When gathered kings with thee converse,
And bid thee all the tale rehearse,
What wilt thou say, O truthful King,
In answer to their questioning?
'She to whose love my life I owe,
Who saved me smitten by the foe,
Kaikeyí, for her tender care,
Was cheated of the oath I sware.'
Thus wilt thou answer, and forsworn
Wilt draw on thee the princes' scorn.
Learn from that tale, the Hawk and Dove,[1]
How strong for truth was Śaivya's love.
Pledged by his word the monarch gave
His flesh the suppliant bird to save.
So King Alarka gave his eyes,
And gained a mansion in the skies.
The Sea himself his promise keeps,
And ne'er beyond his limit sweeps.
My deeds of old again recall,
Nor let thy bond dishonoured fall.
The rights of truth thou wouldst forget,
Thy Ráma on the throne to set,
And let thy days in pleasure glide,
Fond King, Kauśalyá by thy side.

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[1] This story is told in the Mahábhárat. A free version of it may be found in *Scenes from the Rámáyan, Etc.*

Now call it by what name thou wilt,
Justice, injustice, virtue, guilt,
Thy word and oath remain the same,
And thou must yield what thus I claim.
If Ráma be anointed, I
This very day will surely die,
Before thy face will poison drink,
And lifeless at thy feet will sink.
Yea, better far to die than stay
Alive to see one single day
The crowds before Kauśalyá stand
And hail her queen with reverent hand.
Now by my son, myself, I swear,
No gift, no promise whatsoe'er
My steadfast soul shall now content,
But only Ráma's banishment.'

So far she spake by rage impelled,
And then the queen deep silence held.
He heard her speech full fraught with ill,
But spoke no word bewildered still,
Gazed on his love once held so dear
Who spoke unlovely rede to hear;
Then as he slowly pondered o'er
The queen's resolve and oath she swore,
Once sighing forth, Ah Ráma! he
Fell prone as falls a smitten tree.
His senses lost like one insane,
Faint as a sick man weak with pain,
Or like a wounded snake dismayed,
So lay the king whom earth obeyed.
Long burning sighs he slowly heaved,
As, conquered by his woe, he grieved,
And thus with tears and sobs between
His sad faint words addressed the queen:

'By whom, Kaikeyí, wast thou taught
This flattering hope with ruin fraught?
Have goblins seized thy soul, O dame,
Who thus canst speak and feel no shame?
Thy mind with sin is sicklied o'er,
From thy first youth ne'er seen before.
A good and loving wife wast thou,
But all, alas! is altered now.
What terror can have seized thy breast
To make thee frame this dire request,
That Bharat o'er the land may reign,
And Ráma in the woods remain?
Turn from thine evil ways, O turn,
And thy perfidious counsel spurn,
If thou would fain a favour do
To people, lord, and Bharat too.
O wicked traitress, fierce and vile,
Who lovest deeds of sin and guile,
What crime or grievance dost thou see,
What fault in Ráma or in me?
Thy son will ne'er the throne accept
If Ráma from his rights be kept,
For Bharat's heart more firmly yet
Than Ráma's is on justice set.
How shall I say, Go forth, and brook
Upon my Ráma's face to look,
See his pale cheek and ashy lips
Dimmed like the moon in sad eclipse?
How see the plan so well prepared
When prudent friends my counsels shared,
All ruined, like a host laid low
Beneath some foeman's murderous blow?
What will these gathered princes say,
From regions near and far away?

'O'erlong endures the monarch's reign,
For now he is a child again.'
When many a good and holy sage
In Scripture versed, revered for age,
Shall ask for Ráma, what shall I
Unhappy, what shall I reply?
'By Queen Kaikeyí long distressed
I drove him forth and dispossessed.'
Although herein the truth I speak,
They all will hold me false and weak.
What will Kauśalyá say when she
Demands her son exiled by me?
Alas! what answer shall I frame,
Or how console the injured dame?
She like a slave on me attends,
And with a sister's care she blends
A mother's love, a wife's, a friend's.
In spite of all her tender care,
Her noble son, her face most fair,
Another queen I could prefer
And for thy sake neglected her.
But now, O Queen, my heart is grieved
For love and care by thee received,
E'en as the sickening wretch repents
His dainty meal and condiments.
And how will Queen Sumitrá trust
The husband whom she finds unjust,
Seeing my Ráma driven hence
Dishonoured, and for no offence?
Ah! the Videhan bride will hear
A double woe, a double fear,
Two whelming sorrows at one breath,
Her lord's disgrace, his father's death.
Mine aged bosom she will wring

And kill me with her sorrowing,
Sad as a fair nymph left to weep
Deserted on Himálaya's steep.
For short will be my days, I ween,
When I with mournful eyes have seen
My Ráma wandering forth alone
And heard dear Sítá sob and moan.
Ah me! my fond belief I rue,
Vile traitress, loved as good and true,
As one who in his thirst has quaffed,
Deceived by looks, a deadly draught.
Ah! thou hast slain me, murderess, while
Soothing my soul with words of guile,
As the wild hunter kills the deer
Lured from the brake his song to hear.
Soon every honest tongue will fling
Reproach on the dishonest king;
The people's scorn in every street
The seller of his child will meet,
And such dishonour will be mine
As whelms a Bráhman drunk with wine.
Ah me, for my unhappy fate,
Compelled thy words to tolerate!
Such woe is sent to scourge a crime
Committed in some distant time.
For many a day with sinful care
I cherished thee, thou sin and snare,
Kept thee, unwitting, like a cord
Destined to bind its hapless lord.
Mine hours of ease I spent with thee,
Nor deemed my love my death would be.
While like a heedless child I played,
On a black snake my hand I laid.
A cry from every mouth will burst

And all the world will hold me curst,
Because I saw my high-souled son
Unkinged, unfathered, and undone:
'The king by power of love beguiled
Is weaker than a foolish child,
His own beloved son to make
An exile for a woman's sake.
By chaste and holy vows restrained,
By reverend teachers duly trained,
When he his virtue's fruit should taste
He falls by sin and woe disgraced.'
Two words will all his answer be
When I pronounce the stern decree,
'Hence, Ráma, to the woods away,'
All he will say is, I obey.
O, if he would my will withstand
When banished from his home and land,
This were a comfort in my woe;
But he will ne'er do this, I know.
My Ráma to the forest fled,
And curses thick upon my head,
Grim Death will bear me hence away,
His world-abominated prey.
When I am gone and Ráma too,
How wilt thou those I love pursue?
What vengeful sin will be designed
Against the queens I leave behind?
When thou hast slain her son and me
Kauśalyá soon will follow: she
Will sink beneath her sorrows' weight,
And die like me disconsolate.
Exult, Kaikeyí, in thy pride,
And let thy heart be gratified,
When thou my queens and me hast hurled,

And children, to the under world.
Soon wilt thou rule as empress o'er
My noble house unvext before,
But then to wild confusion left,
Of Ráma and of me bereft.
If Bharat to thy plan consent
And long for Ráma's banishment,
Ne'er let his hands presume to pay
The funeral honours to my clay.
Vile foe, thou cause of all mine ill,
Obtain at last thy cursed will.
A widow soon shalt thou enjoy
The sweets of empire with thy boy.
O Princess, sure some evil fate
First brought thee here to devastate,
In whom the night of ruin lies
Veiled in a consort's fair disguise.
The scorn of all and deepest shame
Will long pursue my hated name,
And dire disgrace on me will press,
Misled by thee to wickedness.
How shall my Ráma, whom, before,
His elephant or chariot bore,
Now with his feet, a wanderer, tread
The forest wilds around him spread?
How shall my son, to please whose taste,
The deftest cooks, with earrings graced,
With rivalry and jealous care
The dainty meal and cates prepare—
How shall he now his life sustain
With acid fruit and woodland grain?
He spends his time unvext by cares,
And robes of precious texture wears;
How shall he, with one garment round

His limbs recline upon the ground?
Whose was this plan, this cruel thought
Unheard till now, with ruin fraught,
To make thy son Ayodhyá's king,
And send my Ráma wandering?
Shame, shame on women! Vile, untrue,
Their selfish ends they still pursue.
Not all of womankind I mean,
But more than all this wicked queen.

O worthless, cruel, selfish dame,
I brought thee home, my plague and woe.
What fault in me hast thou to blame,
Or in my son who loves thee so?
Fond wives may from their husbands flee,
And fathers may their sons desert,
But all the world would rave to see
My Ráma touched with deadly hurt.
I joy his very step to hear,
As though his godlike form I viewed;
And when I see my Ráma near
I feel my youth again renewed.
There might be life without the sun,
Yea, e'en if Indra sent no rain,
But, were my Ráma banished, none
Would, so I think, alive remain.
A foe that longs my life to take,
I brought thee here my death to be,
Caressed thee long, a venomed snake,
And through my folly die, Ah me!
Ráma and me and Lakshmaṇ slay,
And then with Bharat rule the state;
So bring the kingdom to decay,
And fawn on those thy lord who hate.
Plotter of woe, for evil bred,

For such a speech why do not all
Thy teeth from out thy wicked head
Split in a thousand pieces fall?
My Ráma's words are ever kind,
He knows not how to speak in ire:
Then how canst thou presume to find
A fault in him whom all admire?
Yield to despair, go mad, or die,
Or sink within the rifted earth;
Thy fell request will I deny,
Thou shamer of thy royal birth.
Thy longer life I scarce can bear,
Thou ruin of my home and race,
Who wouldst my heart and heartstrings tear,
Keen as a razor, false and base.
My life is gone, why speak of joy?
For what, without my son, were sweet?
Spare, lady, him thou canst destroy;
I pray thee as I touch thy feet.'
He fell and wept with wild complaint,
Heart-struck by her presumptuous speech,
But could not touch, so weak and faint,
The cruel feet he strove to reach.

APPENDIX A.

CAPUT XXXVII.

UMAE MAGNANIMITAS.

Vix finito istius sermone, ambo juvenes fortes Raghuides et Laxmanus, narrationem cum plausu excipientes, vatum principem compellarunt: Narrata nobis est a te, Brachmana, sanctissima rerum divinarum memoria; nunc exponere velis de filia montium regis natu maiore: quam ob causam mundi lustratrix illa tres tramites fluctibus proluat? Quaenam opera, vir sancte, eadem in tribus mundis perfecerit? Talia dicente Cacutsthide, Visvâmitras religiosissimus in anachoretarum coetu totam narrationem a principio explicuit. Olim, mi Râma, inquit, post nuptias factas sanctus Caerulicervicus et Uma dea aemulatione mutua ad concubitum se converterunt. Dum sollers Caerulicervicus, numen potentissmum, in Deae sinu delectabatur, centum anni divini elapsi sunt. In tali cupidinis certamine neuter conjugum vinci semet passus est, nec vero etiam diva progeniem inde concepit, O Râma, hostium domitor. Tunc Superi turbati, Magno Parente duce, *secum reputabant:* Quae hic generatur proles, quis eam sustinere poterit? Omnes igitur adierunt deum, qui juvencum in vexillo gestat, et humiliter adorantes magnanimum Caerulicervicum his verbis allocuti sunt: Divûm Dive, fauste, qui omnium animantium salute gaudes! Superûm supplicationi propitium esse te decet. Non tolerare poterunt mundi seminis tui progeniem, Caelitum praestantissime: sanctis votis ad-

strictus cum conjuge tua Diva castimonias exerce. Triplicis mundi servandi studio motus, vigorem masculum tuum ipso vigore cohibe. Sospita hancce animantium universitatem; noli naturae vastitatem efficere. Audito Superûm sermone potentissimus mundi dominus, hac voce: Fiat! prolata, iis annuit, ac porro ita loqui orditur: Cohibebo equidem conjunctim cum Uma vigorem meum masculum ipso vigore. Tum Caelites, tum terra, placida quiete fruantur. Sed dicant mihi Superûm primores, semen meum, vigoris plenissimum, quod e sede sua excitatum est, quis hoc sustinebit? Ita interrogati Superi responderunt deo juvencum in vexillo gestanti: Quod semen hodie tibi excitatum est, id tellus sustinebit. His dictis admonitus Caelitum princeps vigorem suum masculum in terrae solum effudit; quo tellus cum montibus silvisque plane penetrata est. Tunc Superi denuo hunc in modum Ignem adhortari: Aggredere tu cum Aëre consociatus mirificum Rudri semen. *Ambobus hisce deûm iussa alacriter exsequentibus,* id ab Igne rursus penetratum est; inde exstitit mons Candidus, nec non divina silva arundinea; flammae solisque iubar referens, ubi natus est strenuissimus Cârticeius, ex igne ortus. Deinde Superi pariterque Sapientum coetus tum Umam tum Śivam magnopere venerati sunt summo gaudio affecti. At montis nata Caelites intuens, oculos prae ira rubore suffusa, indignabunda diras omnibus imprecari: Quoniam ego, prolis desiderio congressa cum marito, impedita sum a vobis, vestrae quoque uxores ab hoc inde die steriles sunto. His dictis quum superos omnes obiurgasset, tellurem quoque detestata est: "O Terra, tu varias conditiones patieris, multorumque uxor eris; ac mea indignatione contaminata laetitiam filiorum partu non es adeptura; maligna, quae mihi prolem masculam invidisti." Tunc deorum princeps *(Sivas)* quum

Superos pudore confusos videret, accinxit se ad proficiscendum versus plagam coeli a Varuno custoditam. Ibi dominus potentissimus, consociatus cum Diva, ad latus septentrionale montis in excelso Himavantis vertice castimoniis sese dicavit. Ita tibi exposui narrationem de dea Montigena, O Râma; nunc tu cum Laxmano Gangae originem quoque a me traditam accipe.

CAPUT XXXVIII.

CARTICEII GENERATIO.

Dum deorum princeps Trioculus castimonias exercebat, Caelites, exercitus sui ducem desiderantes, Magnum Parentem adierunt, et supplicum habitu, uno ore, cum ducibus suis, Indra atque Igne, almum rerum Parentem faustis hisce verbis affati sunt: Qui nostri exercitus dux olim a te, venerande, nobis datus fuerat, is ad eximias castimonias exercendas cum Uma secessit. Quid interim faciendum sit salutis animantium gratia, moderare tu, utpote moderaminis gnarus: tu ultimum nobis es perfugium. Intellecto deorum sermone Magnus mundi universi Parens, placidis dictis consolatus Caelites, haec respondit: Quod a dea Montigena dictum est, vos ex uxoribus vestris prolem non esse generaturos, id effatum fatale, ne dubitetis, irritum fieri nequit. Sed adest, ecce! Ganga aethera perambulans, ex qua Ignis, qui sacris vescitur, generabit exercitus deorum ducem, hostium domitorem. Natu maior montium regis filia hunc filium fovebit, neque dubitandum est, hoc magnopere ab Uma probatum iri. Quo sermone audito Superi, optati compotes, venerabundi Magnum Parentem adorarunt. Cuncti igitur profecti ad Montem Cailâsum metallis gemmatum, Igni mandarunt, ut filium generandum curaret. "Tu, qui sacris vesci soles, hocce deorum negotium perficiendum suscipe. Emitte semen potentissimum in montis filiam Gangam." Ignis Superis opem suam pollicitus, Gangam adiit, et, Concipe foetum ex me, Diva! inquit; quandoquidem Superis ita placet. Quibus dictis auditis illa formam aetheriam assumpsit, *et undarum aestu-*

antium ambagibus eius impetum elusit. Ignis autem visa nymphae superbia, quoquo versus sese dilatavit, et undique eam irroravit. Quum omnes Gangae torrentes ab eo oppleti essent, divinorum sacrorum antistitem *(Ignem)* ea protinus affatur: Non sufficio, Dive, tolerando vigori tuo masculo, nimis vehementi; uror flammis hisce, et plane animi angor. Tunc Ignis, qui omnium deorum sacris vescitur, Gangae respondit: Hic ad Himavantis radices hicce foetus deponatur. Illa, Ignis dicto intellecto, foetum splendidissimum, semen mirabile, torrentibus suis effudit. Quod ex illa effluxerat purum, micans sicut arena Jambûnadi fluvii,[1] quum primum terram contigit, in aurum mutatum est. Ex acritudine porro aes ac metallum ferrugineum nascebatur; quae hisce sordes inerant, eae in stannum et plumbum convertebantur. Vix autem eiecto foetu, radiis eius illuminatum totum istud nemus monte cinctum aureum est factum. Aurum purum pulcro colore effulsit, ex Ignis vigore natum, quasi corporea Ignis forma, JATARUPA ab eo inde tempore dictum, O Raghuide. Deinde puerum conspicati Ventorum greges Indra duce, ut lac ei suppeditarent, CRITTICAS arcessivere, *nutrices eius futuras.* Hae, consilio capto, postquam egregiam sibi conditionem pepigerant, ut ipsarum in commune filius diceretur, vix nato lac praebuere. Dii universi, illis assentientes, Ne dubitetis! inquiunt; puer hic per triplicem mundum CARTHICEII nomine celebrabitur, quasi CRITTICARUM filius. Quorum sermone audito, nutrices foetum abortu ex utero elapsum abluerunt summa cum venustate ignis instar radiantem. Superi vero, quoniam abortu ex utero elapsus fuerat, Cacutsthide, SCANDUM quoque dixere Cârticeium, validis lacertis praeditum

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[1] Est fluvius aurifer, ex monte Mêrû, quem fabulabantur, scaturiens, unde unum e multis auri nominibus deducitur.

flammaeque similem. Praesto deinde fuit lac praestantissimum sex Critticarum, quem laticem ex mammis enatum puer sex ora gerens imbibit. Quo lacte hausto is uno die iuveniliter protinus adolevit, et bellica fortitudine sua Ditidarum agmina devicit. Hunc splendidissimum Immortales universi, Igne duce congregati, coelestis exercitus imperatorem aqua lustrali inaugurarunt. Sic tibi, mi Râma, nymphae Gangae propaginem declaravi, nec non felicem sanctamque Cumâri originem.'

[1] Haud difficilis est ad divinandum allegoria quae hisce fabulis subest. Deus Martius Sivae filius fertur, numinis potentssimi, a cuius nutu hominum fata alternaeque vitae et mortis vices pendent. Idem tamen ignis ope in lucem prodit, quia acerrimo tum animorum, tum corporum impetu bella geruntur. Simul cum eo gignuntur metalla aes, ferrum, reliqua, e quibus similiter ignis ope fusis et excoctis tela et arma, loricae, scuta, galeae, procuduntur. Gangis nympha deponit haec metalla in montium sinu, quia in iis plerumque eorum venae reperiuntur. Sex *Critticae* sunt totidem Pleiadum stellae, septimam enim Indi non curant. Pingitur autem hoc sidus apud eosdem sub specie novaculae (Sanscrite *Krittiká*), et inter domos lunares tertium locum occupat. Cf. As. Res. II., p. 293. Critticae significant igitur tela varii generis, ad pungendum aut secandum apta: sagittas, gladios, acinaces, jacula, hastas, secures. Lac, quod hae nutrices puero martio praebent, est sanguis e vulneribus effusus, quo bellum magis magisque crudescit. Similis est fabula de Hercule, cui Iuno, ignara quis pueri pater esset, mammam praebuerat, unde is subito ex infante in adolescentem excrevit; quam fabulam paterae Tuscae elegantissime incisam vidimus.

CAPUT XLVI.

FOETUS DITIDIS DIFFISSUS.

Śloka 16.

Haec effata diva, sole circa medium coelum versante, somno abrepta est, atque inter dormiendum pedes in statione capitis posuit. Quam quum ita pollutam videret Indras, pedibus in capitis statione positis capillos contingentem, in risum gaudiumque effusus est. Penetravit itaque urbium eversor, sollertia eminens, per corporis foramen in eius uterum, foetumque septies discidit. At foetus dum centuplici fulminis acie diffindebatur, clara voce eiulavit, quo facto Ditis expergefacta est. Indras vero, Noli eiulare! inquit, foetum increpans, ac viribus pollens quamvis eiulantem diffidit. Ditis contra Parce huic! parce, obsecro! clamabat. Tunc Indras, venerandae matris vocem reformidans, exsiluit; manibusque, quibus fulmen tenebat, suppliciter protensis, hunc in modum Ditim compellavit: Contaminata obdormivisti, O Diva, pedibus capillos contingens; hanc occasionem nactus septies discidi istum, qui Indrae interfector futurus erat, cuius facinoris te mihi veniam dare aequum est.

CAPUT XLIX.

AHALYAE LIBERATIO A DIRIS.

At Sacrus spado factus deos Igne duce congregatos, tum agmen Sapientum, coelitumque Praecones, oculis prae pavore deiectis ita alloquitur: Equidem, dum Gautami magnanimi sanctimoniam impedire studeo, iram eius concitando vestrum re vera, Superi, negotium peregi. Spado factus sum ab irato, illa quoque (*uxor eius*) est deformata; attamen eripui ipsi castimoniarum fructum vehementi, quam effudit, dirarum imprecatione. Quamobrem aequum est ut vos omnes, Superûm principes, cum Sapientum agmine Praeconibusque, me vestri commodi gratia emasculatum denuo masculum reddatis. Sermone dei Sacrifici audito Superi, Ignem ducem secuti, cum Ventorum cohorte PROGENITORES divinos adeuntes, uno ore talia protulere: Aliquando speculatus anachoretae uxorem deus Sacrificus libidinis impotens eam vitiavit: quapropter vatis diris illico spado est factus. Nunc divis ille succenset Coelitum princeps, urbium eversor. En! aries hicce coleatus est, Sacrus vero coleis privatus. Ereptos igitur arieti coleos Sacro sine mora tradite; quo facto aries castratus in summis deliciis vobis erit, et quicumque homines vos recreandi gratia talem arietem vobis offerent, his vosmet praemia perennia ac praeclara concedetis. Audito Ignis sermone, Progenitores congressi arietis coleos comparatos deo mille oculis praedito accommodarunt. Ab eo inde tempore, Cacutsthide, Progenitores, quandocunque conveniunt, arietum castratorum carne vescuntur, quorum coleis

illum redintegraverant. Indras autem, Gautami magnanimi potentia ac sanctitate perculsus, ab eo inde tempore coleis arietis usus est. Adi ergo, inclyte Raghuide, secessum viri religiosi; exsolve diris praeclaram illam Ahalyam, divina forma praeditam.

APPENDIX B.

RÁVAṆ DOOMED.

SECTION XIII.

Afterwards R*i*shy*a*-shṛ*i*ng*a* said again to the King, "I will perform another sacrificial act to secure thee a son." Then the son of V*i*bhand*u*k*a*, of subdued passions, seeking the happiness of the king, proceeded to perform the sacrifice for the accomplishment of his wishes. Hither were previously collected the gods, with the G*u*ndh*u*rv*a*s, the Siddh*a*s and the sages, for the sake ef receiving their respective shares, Br*u*hm*a* too, the sovereign of the gods, with Sthan*oo*, and Naray*a*-n*a*, chief of beings and the four supporters of the universe, and the divine mothers of all the celestials, met together there. To the *U*shw*a*-medh*a*, the great sacrifice of the magnanimous monarch, came also *I*ndr*a* the glorious one, surrounded by the M*u*r*oo*ts. R*i*shy*a*-shr*i*ng*a* then supplicated the gods assembled for their share of the sacrifice (saying), "This devout king D*u*sh*a*-r*u*th*a*, who, through the desire of offspring, confiding in you, has performed sacred austerities, and who has offered to you the sacrifice called *U*shw*a*-medh*a*, is about to perform another sacrifice for the sake of obtaining sons. To him thus desirous ot offspring be pleased to grant the blessing: I supplicate you all with joined hands. May he have four sons, renowned through the universe." The gods replied to the sage's son supplicating with joined hands, "Be it so: thou, O brahman, art ever to be regarded by us, as the king is

in a peculiar manner. The lord of men by this sacrifice shall obtain the great object of his desires. Having thus said, the gods preceded by *Indra*, disappeared.

They all then having seen that (sacrifice) performed by the great sage according to the ordinance went to Pr*u*jap*u*t*i* the lord of mankind, and with joined hands addressed Br*u*hm*a* the giver of blessings, " O Br*u*hm*a*, the R*a*ksh*u*s Rav*u*n*a* by name, to whom a blessing was awarded by thee, through pride troubleth all of us the gods, and even the great sages, who perpetually practise sacred austerities. We, O glorious one, regarding the promise formerly granted by thy kindness that he should be invulnerable to the gods, the Dan*u*v*a*s and the Y*u*ksh*a*s have born (*sic*) all (his oppression); this lord of R*a*ksh*u*s therefore distresses the universe; and, inflated by this promise unjustly vexes the divine sages, the Y*u*ksh*a*s, and G*u*ndh*u*rv*a*s, the *U*soor*a*s, and men: where Rav*u*n*a* remains there the sun loses his force, the winds through fear of him do not blow; the fire ceases to burn; the rolling ocean, seeing him, ceases to move its waves. Vishr*u*v*a*n*a*, distressed by his power has abandoned L*u*nka and fled. O divine one save us from Rav*u*n*a*, who fills the world with noise and tumult. O giver of desired things, be pleased to contrive a way for his destruction."

Br*u*hm*a* thus informed by the dev*a*s, reflecting, replied, Oh! I have devised the method for slaying this outrageous tyrant. Upon his requesting, "May I be invulnerable to the divine sages, the G*u*ndh*u*rv*a*s, the Y*u*ksh*a*s, the Raksh*u*ses, and the serpents," I replied "Be it so." This Raksh*u*s, through contempt, said nothing respecting man; therefore this wicked one shall be destroyed by man. The gods, preceded by Sh*u*kr*a*, hearing these words spoken by Br*u*hm*a*, were filled with joy.

At this time V*i*shn*oo* the glorious, the lord of the world, arrayed in yellow, with hand ornaments of glowing gold, riding on Vin*u*teya, as the sun on a cloud, arrived with his conch, his discus, and his club in his hand. Being adored by the excellent celestials, and welcomed by Br*u*hm*a*, he drew near and stood before him. All the gods then addressed V*i*shn*oo*, "O M*u*dh*oo*-s*oo*d*u*n*a*, thou art able to abolish the distress of the distressed. We intreat thee, be our sanctuary, O *U*chy*oo*t*a*." V*i*shn*oo* replied, "Say, what shall I do?" The celestials hearing these his words added further, "The virtuous, the encourager of excellence, eminent for truth, the firm observer of his vows, being childless, is performing an *U*shw*a*-medh*a* for the purpose of obtaining offspring. For the sake of the good of the universe, we intreat thee, O V*i*shn*oo*, to become his son. Dividing thyself into four parts, in the wombs of his three consorts equal to H*u*r*i*, Shree, and Keertee, assume the sonship of king D*u*sh*a*-r*u*th*a*, the lord of *U*yodhya, eminent in the knowledge of duty, generous and illustrious, as the great sages. Thus becoming man, O V*i*shn*oo*, conquer in battle Rav*u*n*a*, the terror of the universe, who is invulnerable to the gods. This ignorant Rakshus Rav*u*n*a*, by the exertion of his power, afflicts the gods, the G*u*ndhurv*a*s, the S*i*ddh*a*s, and the most excellent sages; these sages, the G*u*ndh*u*rv*a*s, and the *U*ps*a*r*a*s, sporting in the forest N*u*nd*u*n*a* have been destroyed by that furious one. We, with the sages, are come to thee seeking his destruction. The S*i*ddh*a*s, the G*u*ndh*u*rv*a*s, and the Y*u*ksh*a*s betake themselves to thee, thou art our only refuge; O Dev*a*, afflicter of enemies, regard the world of men, and destroy the enemy of the gods."

V*i*shn*oo*, the sovereign of the gods, the chief of the

celestials, adored by all beings, being thus supplicated, replied to all the assembled gods (standing) before Br*u*hm*a*, "Abandon fear; peace be with you; for your benefit having killed Rav*u*n*a* the cruel, destructively active, the cause of fear to the divine sages, together with all his posterity, his courtiers and counsellors, and his relations, and friends, protecting the earth, I will remain incarnate among men for the space of eleven thousand years."

Having given this promise to the gods, the divine V*i*shn*oo*, ardent in the work, sought a birth-place among men. Dividing himself into four parts, he whose eyes resemble the lotos and the p*u*las*a*, the lotos petal-eyed, chose for his father D*u*sh*a*-r*a*th*a* the sovereign of men. The divine sages then with the G*u*ndh*u*rv*a*s, the Rood-r*a*s, and the (different sorts of) *U*ps*a*r*a*s, in the most excellent strains, praised the destroyer of M*u*dh*oo*, (saying) "Root up Rav*u*n*a*, of fervid energy, the devastator, the enemy of *I*ndr*a* swollen with pride. Destroy him, who causes universal lamentation, the annoyer of the holy ascetics, terrible, the terror of the devout T*u*p*u*s-wees. Having destroyed Rav*u*n*a*, tremendously powerful, who causes universal weeping, together with his army and friends, dismissing all sorrow, return to heaven, the place free from stain and sin, and protected by the sovereign of the celestial powers."

Thus far the Section, containing the plan for the death of Rav*u*n*a*.

Carey and Marshman.

CAPUT XIV.

RATIO NECANDI RAVANAE EXCOGITATA.

Prudens ille, voluminum sacrorum gnarus, responsum quod dederat aliquamdiu meditatus, mente ad se revocata regem denuo est effatus : Parabo tibi aliud sacrum, genitale, prolis masculae adipiscendae gratia, cum carminibus in ATHARVANIS exordio expressis rite peragendum. Tum coepit modestus Vibhândaci filius, regis commodis intentus, parare sacrum, quo eius desiderium expleret. Iam antea eo convenerant, ut suam quisque portionem acciperent, Dî cum fidicinum coelestium choris, Beatique cum Sapientibus ; Brachman Superûm regnator, Sthânus, nec non augustus Nârâyanus, Indrasque almus, coram visendus Ventorum cohorte circumdatus, in magno isto sacrificio equino regis magnanimi. Ibidem vates ille deos, qui portiones suas accipiendi gratia advenerant, apprecatus, En ! inquit, hicce rex Dasarathus filiorum desiderio castimoniis adstrictus, fidei plenus, vestrum numen adoravit sacrificio equino. Nunc iterum accingit se ad aliud sacrum peragendum : quamobrem aequum est, ut filios cupienti vos faveatis. Ille ego, qui manus supplices tendo, vos universos pro eo apprecor : nascantur ei filii quatuor, fama per triplicem mundum clari. Divi supplicem vatis filium invicem affari : Fiat quod petis ! Tu nobis, vir sancte, imprimis es venerandus, nec minus rex ille ; compos fiet voti sui egregii hominum princeps. Ita locuti Dî, Indra duce, ex oculis evanuerunt.

Superi vero, legitime in concilio congregati, BRACH-

MANEM mundi creatorem his verbis compellarunt: Tuo munere auctus, O Brachman! gigas nomine Râvanas, prae superbia nos omnes vexat, pariterque Sapientes castimoniis gaudentes. A te propitio olim ex voto ei hoc munus concessûm fuit, ut ne a diis, Danuidis, Geniisve necari posset. Nos, oraculum tuum reveriti, facinora eius qualiacunque toleramus. At ille gigantum tyrannus ternos mundos gravibus iniuriis vexat. Deos, Sapientes, Genios, Fidicines coelestes, Titanes, mortales denique, exsuperat ille aegre cohibendus, tuoque munere demens. Non ibi calet sol, neque Ventus prae timore spirat, nec flagrat ignis, ubi Râvanas versatur. Ipse oceanus, vagis fluctibus redimitus, isto viso stat immotus; eiectus fuit e sede sua Cuvêrus, huius robore vexatus. Ergo ingens nobis periculum imminet ab hoc gigante visu horribili; tuum est, alme Parens! auxilium parare, quo hic deleatur. Ita admonitus ille a diis universis, paulisper meditatus, Ehem! inquit, hancce inveni rationem nefarium istum necandi. Petierat is a me, ut a Gandharvis, a Geniis, a Divis, Danuibus Gigantibusque necari non posset, et me annuente voto suo potitus est. Prae contemptu vero monstrum illud homines non commemoravit: ideo ab homine est necandus; nullum aliud exstat leti genus, quod ei sit fatale. Postquam audiverant gratum hunc sermonem BRACHMANIS ore prolatum, Dî cum duce suo Indra summopere gaudio erecti sunt. Eodem temporis momento Vishnus istuc accessit, splendore insignis, concham, discum et clavum manibus gestans, croceo vestitu, mundi dominus; vulturis Vinateii dorso, sicuti sol nimbo, vectus, armillas ex auro candente gerens, salutatus a Superûm primoribus. Quem laudibus celebratum reverenter Dî universi compellarunt. Tu animantium afflictorum es vindex, Madhûs interfector! quamobrem nos afflicti

te apprecamur. Sis praesidio nobis numine tuo inconcusso. Dicite, inquit Vishnus, quid pro nobis facere me oporteat. Audito eius sermone, Dî hunc in modum respondent: Rex quidam, nomine Dasarathus, austeris castimoniis sese castigavit, litavit sacrificio equino, prolis cupidus et prole carens. Nostro hortatu tu, Vishnus, conditionem natorum eius subeas; ex tribus eius uxoribus, Pudicitiae, Venustatis et Famae similibus, nasci velis, temetipsum quadrifariam dividens. Ibi tu in humanam naturam conversus Râvanam, gravissimam mundi pestem, diis insuperabilem, O Vishnus! proelio caede. Gigas ille vecors Râvanas Deos cum Fidicinum choris, Beatos et Sapientes praestantissimos vexat, audacia superbiens. Etenim ab hoc furioso Sapientes, Fidicines et nymphae, ludentes in Nandano viridario, sunt proculcati. Tu es nostrum omnium summa salus, divine bellator! Ut deorum hostes extinguas, ad sortem humanam animum converte. Augustus ille Nârâyanus, diis hunc in modum coram hortantibus, eosdem apto hoc sermone compellavit: Quare, quaeso, hac in re negotium vestrum a me potissimum, corporea specie palam facto, est peragendum? aut unde tantus vobis terror fuit iniectus? His verbis a Vishnû interrogati Dî talia proferre: Terror nobis instat, O Vishnus! a Râvana mundi direptore; a quô nos vindicare, corpore humano assumpto, tuum est. Nemo alius coelicolarum praeter te hunc scelestum enecare potis est. Nimirum ille, O hostium domitor! per diuturnum tempus sese excruciaverat severissima abstinentia, qua magnus hicce rerum Parens propitius ipsi redditus est. Itaque almus votorum sponsor olim ei concessit securitatem ab ommibus animantibus, hominibus tamen exceptis. Hinc illum, voti compotem, non aliunde quam ab homine necis periculum urget: tu ergo, humanitate as-

sumpta eum interfice. Sic monitus Vishnus, Superûm princeps, quem mundus universus adorat, magnum Parentem ceterosque deos, in concilio congregatos, recti auctores, affatur: Mittite timorem; bene vobis eveniat! Vestrae salutis gratia, postquam praelio necavero Râvanam cum filiis nepotibusque, cum amicis, ministris, cognatis sociisque, crudelem istum aegre cohibendum, qui divinis Sapientibus terrorem incutit, per decem millia annorum decies centenis additis, commorabor in mortalium sedibus, orbem terrarum imperio regens. Tum divini sapientes et Fidicines coniuncti cum Rudris nympharumque choris celebravere Madhûs interfectorem hymnis, quales sedem aetheriam decent.

"Râvanam illum insolentem, acri impetu actum, superbia elatum; Superûm hostem, tumultus cientem, bonorum piorumque pestem, humanitate assumpta pessumdare tuum est."

SCHLEGEL.

CAPITOLO XIV.

IL MEZZO STABILITO PER UCCIDERE RÂVANO.

Ma Riscyasringo soggiunse poscia al re: T' apresterò io un altro rito santissimo, genitale, onde tu conseguisca la prole che tu brami. E in quel punto stesso il saggio figliulo di Vibhândaco, intento alla prosperità del re, pose mano al sacro rito per condurre ad effetto il suo desiderio. Già erano prima, per ricevere ciascuno la sua parte, quì convenuti al gran sacrifizio del re magnanimo l'Asvamedha, i Devi coi Gandharvi, i Siddhi e i Muni, Brahma Signor dei Suri, Sthânu e l' Augusto Nârâyana, i quattro custodi dell' universo e le Madri degli Iddii, i Yacsi insieme cogli Dei, e il sovrano, venerando Indra, visibile, circondato dalla schiera dei Maruti. Quivi così parlò Riscyasringo agli Dei venuti a partecipare del sacrifizio: Questo è il re Dasaratha, che per desiderio di progenie già s' astrinse ad osservanze austere, e testè pieno di fede ha a voi, O eccelsi, sacrificato con un Asvamedha. Ora egli, sollecito d' aver figli, si dispone ad adempiere un nuovo rito; vogliate essere favorevole a lui che sospira progenie. Io alzo a voi supplici le mani, e voi tutti per lui imploro: nascano a lui quattro figli degni d'essere celebrati pei tre mondi. Risposero gli Dei al supplichevole figliuolo del Risci: Sia fatto ciò che chiedi; a te ed al re parimente si debbe da noi, O Brahmano, sommo pregio; conseguirà il re per questo sacro rito il suo supremo desiderio. Ciò detto disparvero i Numi preceduti da Indra.

Poichè videro gli Dei compiersi debitamente dal gran Risci l'oblazione, venuti al cospetto di Brahma facitor

del mondo, signor delle creature, così parlarono reverenti a lui dator di grazie: O Brahma, un Racsaso per nome Râvano, cui tu fosti largo del tuo favore, è per superbia infesto a noi tutti e ai grandi Saggi penitenti. Un dì, O Nume augusto, tu propizio a lui gli accordasti il favore, ch' egli bramava, di non poter essere ucciso dagli Dei, dai Dânavi nè dai Yacsi: noi venerando i tuoi oracoli, ogni cosa sopportiamo da costui. Quindi il signor dei Racsasi infesta con perpetue offese i tre mondi, i Devi, i Risci, i Yacsi ed i Gandharvi, gli Asuri e gli uomini: tutti egli opprime indegnamente inorgoglito pel tuo dono. Colà, dove si trova Râvano, più non isfavilla per timore il sole, più non spira il vento, più non fiammeggia il fuoco: l' oceano stesso, cui fan corona i vasti flutti, veggendo costui, tutto si turba e si commuove. Stretto dalla forza di costui e ridotto allo stremo dovette Vaisravano abbandonare Lancâ. Da questo Râvano, terror del mondo, tu ne proteggi, O almo Nume: degna, O dator d'ogni bene, trovar modo ad estirpar costui. Fatto di queste cose conscio dai Devi, stette alquanto meditando, poi rispose Brahma: Orsù! è stabilito il modo onde distruggere questo iniquo. Egli a me chiese, ed io gliel concessi, di non poter essere ucciso dai Devi, dai Risci, dai Gandharvi, dai Yacsi, dai Racsasi nè dai Serpenti; ma per disprezzo non fece menzione degli uomini quel Racso: or bene, sarà quell' empio ucciso da un uomo. Udite le fauste parole profferte da Brahma, furono per ogni parte lieti gli Iddii col loro duce Indra. In questo mezzo quì sopravvenne raggiante d'immensa luce il venerando Visnu, pensato da Brahma nell' immortal sua mente, siccome atto ad estirpar colui; Allora Brahma colla schiera de' Celesti così parlò a Visnu: Tu sei il conforto delle gente oppresse, O distruttor di Madhu: noi quindi a te supplichiamo afflitti: sia tu nostro

sostegno, O Aciuto. Dite, loro rispose Visnu, quale cosa io debba far per voi; e gli Dei, udite queste parole, così soggiunsero: Un re per nome Dasaratha, giusto, virtuoso, veridico e pio, non ha progenie e la desidera: ei già s' impose durissime penitenze, ed ora ha sacrificato con un Asvamedha: tu, per nostro consiglio, O Visnu, consenti a divenir suo figlio: fatte di te quattro parti, ti manifesta, O invocato dalle genti, nel seno delle quattro sue consorti, simili alla venusta Dea. Così esortato dagli Dei quivi presenti, l'augusto Nârâyana loro rispose queste opportune parole: Quale opra s'ha da me, fatto visibile nel mondo, a compiere per voi, O Devi? e d'onde in voi cotal terrore? Intese le parole di Visnu, così risposero gli Dei: Il nostro terrore, O Visnu, nasce da un Racsaso per nome Râvano, spavento dell' universo. Vestendo umano corpo, tu debbi esterminar costui. Nessuno fra i Celesti, fuorchè tu solo, è valevole ad uccidere quell' iniquo. Egli, O domator de' tuoi nemici, sostenne per lungo tempo acerbissime macerazioni: per esse fu di lui contento l'augusto sommo Genitore; e un dì gli accordò propizio la sicurezza da tutti gli esseri, eccettutine gli uomini. Per questo favore a lui concesso non ha egli a temere offesa da alcuna parte, fuorchè dall' uomo, perciò, assumendo la natura umana, costui tu uccidi. Egli, il peggior di tutti i Racsasi, insano per la forza che gli infonde il dono avuto, da travaglio ai Devi ed ai Gandharvi, ai Risci, ai Muni ed ai mortali. Egli, sicuro da morte pel favore ottenuto, è turbatore dei sacrifizj, nemico ed uccisor dei Brahmi, divoratore degli uomini, peste del mondo. Da lui furono assaliti re coi loro carri ed elefanti; altri percossi e fugati si dispersero per ogni dove. Da lui furono divorati Risci ed Apsarase: egli insomma oltracotato continuamente e quasi per ischerzo tutti travaglia i sette mondi. Perciò,

O terribile ai nemici è stabilita la morte di costui per opra d'un uomo; poich' egli un dì per superbia del dono tutti sprezzò gli uomini. Tu, O supremo fra i Numi, dei, umanandoti, estirpare questo tremendo, superbo Râvano, oltracotato, a noi nemico, terrore e flagello dei penitenti.

GORRESIO.

XIV.

De nouveau Rishyaçringa tint ce langage au Monarque: "Je vais célébrer un autre sacrifice, afin que le ciel accorde à tes vœux les enfants que tu souhaites." Cela dit, cherchant le bonheur du roi et pour l'accomplissement de son désir, le fils puissant de Vibhándaka se mit à célébrer ce nouveau sacrifice.

Là, auparavant, étaient venus déjà recevoir une part de l' offrande les Dieux, accompagnés des Gandharvas, et les Siddhas avec les Mounis divins, Bráhma, le monarque des Souras, l' immuable Śiva, et l' auguste Náráyana, et les quatre gardiens vigilants du monde, et les mères des Immortels, et tous les Dieux, escortés des Yakshas, et le maître éminent du ciel, Indra, qui se manifestait aux yeux, environné par l' essaim des Maroutes. Alors ce jeune anachorète avait supplié tous les Dieux, que le désir d'une part dans l' offrande avait conduits à l' açwamédha, cette grande cérémonie de ce roi magnanime; *et, dans ce moment, l' époux de Śántá les conjurait ainsi pour la seconde fois:* "Cet homme *en prières,* c'est le roi Daçaratha, qui est privé de fils. Il est rempli d' une foi vive; il s'est infligé de pénibles austérités; il vous a déjà servi, divinités augustes, le sacrifice d'un açwa-médha, et maintenant il s'étudie encore à vous plaire avec ce nouveau sacrifice dans l'espérance que vous lui donnerez les fils, où tendent ses désirs. Versez donc sur lui votre bienveillance et daignez sourire à son vœu pour des fils. C'est pour lui que moi ici, les mains jointes, je vous adresse à tous mes

supplications : envoyez-lui quatre fils, qui soient vantés dans les trois mondes !"

"Oui ! répondirent les Dieux au fils suppliant du rishi ; tu mérites que nous t'écoutions avec faveur, toi, brahme saint, et même, en premier lieu, ce roi. Comme récompense de ces différents sacrifices, le monarque obtendra cet objet le plus cher de ses désirs."

Ayant aussi parlé et vu que le grand saint avait mis fin suivant les rites à son *pieux* sacrifice, les Dieux, Indra à leur tête, s'évanouissent dans le vide des airs et se rendent vers l' architecte des mondes, le souverain des créatures, le donateur des biens, vers Brahma enfin, auquel tous, les mains jointes, ils adressent les paroles suivantes : "O Brahma, un rakshasa, nommé Râvana, tourne au mal les grâces, qu'il a reçues de toi. Dans son orgueil, il nous opprime tous ; il opprime avec nous les grands anchorètes, qui se font un bonheur des macérations ; car jadis, ayant su te plaire, O Bhagavat, il a reçu de toi ce don incomparable. "Oui, as-tu dit, exauçant le vœu du mauvais Génie ; Dieu, Yaksha ou Démon ne pourra jamais causer ta mort !" Et nous, par qui ta parole est respectée, nous avons tout supporté de ce roi des rakshasas, qui écrase de sa tyrannie les trois mondes, ou il promène l' injure impunément. Enorgueilli de ce don victorieux, il opprime indignement les Dieux, les rishis, les Yakshas, les Gandharvas, les Asouras et les enfants de Manou. Là ou se tient Râvana, la peur empêche le soleil d' échauffer, le vent craint de souffler, et le feu n'ose flamboyer. A son aspect, la guirlande même des grands flots tremble au sein de la mer. Accablé par sa vigueur indomptable, Kouvéra défait lui a cédé Lanká. Sauve-nous donc, ô toi, qui reposes daus le bonheur absolu ; sauve-nous de Râvana, le fléau des mondes. Daigne, ô toi, qui souris

aux vœux du suppliant, daigne imaginer un expédient pour ôter la vie à ce cruel Démon." Les Dieux ayant ainsi dénoncé leurs maux à Brahma, il réfléchit un instant et leur tint ce langage: "Bien, voici que j'ai découvert un moyen pour tuer ce Génie scélérat. Que ni les Dieux, a-t-il dit, ni les rishis, ni les Gandharvas, ni les Yakshas, ni les rakshasas, ni les Nágas même ne puissent me donner la mort! Soit! lui ai-je répondu. Mais, par dédain pour la force humaine, les hommes n'ont pas été compris daus sa demande. C'est donc par la main d' un homme, qu'il faut immoler ce méchant." Ainsi tombée de la bouche du créateur, cette parole salutaire satisfit pleinement le roi des habitants du ciel et tous les Dieux avec lui. Lá, dans ce même instant, survint le fortuné Vishnou, revêtu d' une splendeur infinie; car c'était a lui, que Brahma avait pensé dans son âme pour la mort du tyran. Celui-ci donc avec l'essaim des Immortels adresse à Vishnou ces paroles: "Meurtrier de Madhou, comme tu aimes á tirer de l' affliction les êtres malheureux, nous te supplions, nous qui sommes plongés dans la tristesse, Divinité auguste, sois notre asyle!" "Dites! reprit Vishnou; que dois-je faire?" Ayant oui les paroles de l' ineffable, tous les Dieux répondirent: "Il est un roi nommé Daçaratha; il a embrassé une très-dure pénitence; il a célébré même le sacrifice d' un açwa-medha, parce qu'il n'a point de fils et qu' il veut en obtenir du ciel. Il est inébranlable dans sa piété, il est vanté pour ses vertus; la justice est son caractère, la verité est sa parole. Acquiesce donc à notre demande, ô toi, Vishnou, et consens à naître comme son fils. Divisé en quatre portions de toi-même, daigne, ô toi, qui foules aux pieds tes ennemis, daigne t' incarner dans le sein de ses trois épouses, belles comme la déesse de la beauté."

Nárâyana, le maître, *non perceptible aux sens, mais qui alors s' était rendu* visible, Nárâyana répondit cette parole salutaire aux Dieux, qui l' invitaient à cet *héroïque avatâra.* Quelle chose, une fois revêtu de cette incarnation, faudra-t-il encore que je fasse pour vous, et de quelle part vient la terreur, qui vous trouble ainsi?' A ces mots du grand Vishnou: "C'est le démon Râvana, reprirent les Dieux; c'est lui, Vishnou, cette désolation des mondes, qui nous inspire un tel effroi. Enveloppe-toi d' un corps humain, et qu'il te plaise arrâcher du monde cette blessante épine; car nul autre que toi parmi les habitants du ciel n'est capable d'immoler ce pécheur. *Sache que* longtemps il s'est imposé la plus austére pénitence, et *que* par elle il s'est rendu agréable au suprême ayeul de toutes les créatures. Aussi le distributeur ineffable des grâces lui a-t-il accordé ce don insigne d'être invulnérable à tous les êtres, l' homme seul excepté. Puisque, doué ainsi de cette faveur, la mort terrible et sûre ne peut venir à lui de nulle autre part que de l' homme, va, dompteur *puissant* de tes ennemis, va dans la condition humaine, et tue-le. Car ce don, auquel on ne peut résister, élevant au plus haut point l' ivresse de sa force, le vil rakshasa tourmente les Dieux, les rishis, les Gandharvas, les hommes sanctifiés par la pénitonce; et, quoique, destructeur des sacrifices, lacérateur des Saintes Ecritures, ennemi des brahmes, dévorateur des hommes, cette faveur incomparable sauve de la mort Râvana, le triste fléau des mondes. Il ose attaquer les rois, que défendent les chars de guerre, que remparent les éléphants: d' autres blessés et mis en fuite, sont dissipés çe et là devant lui. Il a dévoré des saints, il a dévoré même une foule d'apsaras. Sans cesse, dans son délire, il s'amuse à tourmenter les sept mondes. Comme *on vient de nous ap-*

prendre qu' il n' a point daigné parler d'eux, ce jour, que lui fut donnée cette faveur, *dont il abuse*, entre dans un corps humain, ô toi, qui peux briser tes ennemis, et jette sans vie à tes pieds, roi puissant des treize Dieux, ce Râvana superbe, d'une force épouvantable, d'un orgueil immense, l' ennemi de tous les ascètes, ce ver, *qui les ronge*, cette cause de leurs gémissements."

Ici, dans le premier tome du saint Râmâyana, Finit le quatorzième chapitre, nommé : UN EXPÉDIENT POUR TUER RÁVANA.

Hippolyte Fauche.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

QUEEN FORTUNE.

'A curious festival is celebrated in honour of this divinity (Lakshmî) on the fifth lunar day of the light half of the month Mâgha (February), when she is identified with Saraswatí the consort of Brahmá, and the goddess of learning. In his treatise on festivals, a great modern authority, Raghunandana, mentions, on the faith of a work called *Samvatsara-sàndîpa*, that Lakshmî is to be worshipped in the forenoon of that day with flowers, perfumes, rice, and water; that due honour is to be paid to inkstand and writing-reed, and no writing to be done. Wilson, in his essay on the *Religious Festivals of the Hindus* (works, vol. ii p. 188. ff.), adds that on the morning of the 2nd February, the whole of the pens and inkstands, and the books, if not too numerous and bulky, are collected, the pens or reeds cleaned, the inkstands scoured, and the books wrapped up in new cloth, are arranged upon a platform, or a sheet, and strewn over with flowers and blades of young barley, and that no flowers except white are to be offered. After performing the necessary rites, ...all the members of the family assemble and make their prostrations; the books, the pens, and ink having an entire holiday; and should any emergency require a written communication on the day dedicated to the divinity of scholarship, it is done with chalk or charcoal upon a black or white board.'

CHAMBERS'S ENCYCLOPÆDIA. *Lakshmî.*

INDRA.

'The Hindu Jove or Jupiter Tonans, chief of the secondary deities. He presides over swarga or paradise, and is more

particularly the god of the atmosphere and winds. He is also regent of the east quarter of the sky. As chief of the deities he is called Devapati, Devadeva, Surapati, etc.; as lord of the atmosphere, Divaspati; as lord of the eight Vasus or demigods, Fire, etc., Vásava; as breaking cities into fragments, Purandara, Puranda; as lord of a hundred sacrifices (the performance of a hundred Aśvamedhas elevating the sacrificer to the rank of Indra) Śatakratu, Śatamakha; as having a thousand eyes, Sahasráksha; as husband of Śachí, Śachípati. His wife is called Śachí, Indráṇí, Śakráṇí, Maghoní, Indraśakti, Pulomajá, and Paulomí. His son is Jayanta. His pleasure garden or elysium is Nandana; his city, Amarávatí; his palace, Vaijayanta; his horse, Uchchaihśravas; his elephant, Airávata; his charioteer, Mátali.'

Professor M. Williams's English-Sanskrit Dictionary. *Indra.*

VISHṆU.

'The second person of the Hindu triad, and the most celebrated and popular of all the Indian deities. He is the personification of the preserving power, and became incarnate in nine different forms, for the preservation of mankind in various emergencies. Before the creation of the universe, and after its temporary annihilation, he is supposed to sleep on the waters, floating on the serpent Śesha, and is then identified with Náráyaṇa. Brahmá, the creator, is fabled to spring at that time from a lotus which grows from his navel, whilst thus asleep.......His ten avatárs or incarnations are:

1. The Matsya, or fish. In this avatár Vishṇu descended in the form of a fish to save the pious king Satyavrata, who with the seven Rishis and their wives had taken refuge in the ark to escape the deluge which then destroyed the earth. 2. The Kúrma, or Tortoise. In this he descended in the form

of a tortoise, for the purpose of restoring to man some of the comforts lost during the flood. To this end he stationed himself at the bottom of the ocean, and allowed the point of the great mountain Mandara to be placed upon his back, which served as a hard axis, whereon the gods and demons, with the serpent Vásuki twisted round the mountain for a rope, churned the waters for the recovery of the amrita or nectar, and fourteen other sacred things. 3. The Varáha, or Boar. In this he descended in the form of a boar to rescue the earth from the power of a demon called 'golden-eyed,' Hiraṇyáksha. This demon had seized on the earth and carried it with him into the depths of the ocean. Vishṇu dived into the abyss, and after a contest of a thousand years slew the monster. 4. The Narasinha, or Man-lion. In this monstrous shape of a creature half-man, half-lion, Vishṇu delivered the earth from the tyranny of an insolent demon called Hiraṇya-kaśipu. 5. Vámana, or Dwarf. This avatár happened in the second age of the Hindús or Tretáyug, the four preceding are said to have occured in the first or Satyayug; the object of this avatár was to trick Bali out of the dominion of the three worlds. Assuming the form of a wretched dwarf he appeared before the king and asked, as a boon, as much land as he could pace in three steps. This was granted; and Vishṇu immediately expanding himself till he filled the world, deprived Bali at two steps of heaven and earth, but in consideration of some merit, left Pátála still in his dominion. 6, Parasuráma. 7, Rámchandra. 8, Kṛishṇa, or according to some Balaráma. 9. Buddha. In this avatár Vishṇu descended in the form of a sage for the purpose of making some reform in the religion of the Brahmins, and especially to reclaim them from their proneness to animal sacrifice. Many of the Hindús will not allow this to have been an incarnation of their favourite god. 10, Kalki, or White Horse. This is yet to come. Vishṇu mounted on a white horse, with a drawn scimitar, blazing like a comet,

will, according to prophecy, end this present age, viz. the fourth or Kaliyug, by destroying the world, and then renovating creation by an age of purity.'

WILLIAMS's Dictionary, *Vishṇu.*

ŚIVA.

'A celebrated Hindú God, the Destroyer of creation, and therefore the most formidable of the Hindú Triad. He also personifies reproduction, since the Hindú philosophy excludes the idea of total annihilation without subsequent regeneration. Hence he is sometimes confounded with Brahmá, the creator or first person of the Triad. He is the particular God of the Tántrikas, or followers of the books called Tantras. His worshippers are termed Śaivas, and although not so numerous as the Vaishṇavas, exalt their god to the highest place in the heavens, and combine in him many of the attributes which properly belong to the other deities. According to them Śiva is Time, Justice, Fire, Water, the Sun, the Destroyer and Creator. As presiding over generation, his type is the Linga, or Phallus, the origin probably of the Phallic emblem of Egypt and Greece. As the God of generation and justice, which latter character he shares with the god Yama, he is represented riding a white bull. His own colour, as well as that of the bull, is generally white, referring probably to the unsullied purity of Justice. His throat is dark-blue; his hair of a light reddish colour, and thickly matted together, and gathered above his head like the hair of an ascetic. He is sometimes seen with two hands, sometimes with four, eight, or ten, and with five faces. He has three eyes, one being in the centre of his forehead, pointing up and down. These are said to denote his view of the three divisions of time, past, present, and future. He holds a trident in his hand to denote, as some say, his relationship to water, or according to others, to show that the three great attributes of Creator, Destroyer,

and Regenerator are combined in him. His loins are enveloped in a tiger's skin. In his character of Time, he not only presides over its extinction, but also its astronomical regulation. A crescent or half-moon on his forehead indicates the measure of time by the phases of the moon; a serpent forms one of his necklaces to denote the measure of time by years, and a second necklace of human skulls marks the lapse and revolution of ages, and the extinction and succession of the generations of mankind. He is often represented as entirely covered with serpents, which are the emblems of immortality. They are bound in his hair, round his neck, wrists, waist, arms and legs; they serve as rings for his fingers, and earrings for his ears, and are his constant companions. Śiva has more than a thousand names which are detailed at length in the sixty-ninth chapter of the Śiva Puráṇa.—WILLIAMS'S DICTIONARY, *Śiva.*

APSARASES.

'Originally these deities seem to have been personifications of the vapours which are attracted by the sun, and form into mist or clouds: their character may be thus interpreted in the few hymns of the Rig-veda where mention is made of them. At a subsequent period when the Gandharva of the Rigveda who personifies there especially the Fire of the Sun, expanded into the Fire of Lightning, the rays of the moon and other attributes of the elementary life of heaven as well as into pious acts referring to it, the Apsarasas become divinities which represent phenomena or objects both of a physical and ethical kind closely associated with that life; thus in the *Yajurveda* Sunbeams are called the Apsarasas associated with the Gandharva who is the Sun; Plants are termed the Apsarasas connected with the Gandharva Fire: Constellations are the Apsarasas of the Gandharva Moon: Waters the Apsarasas of the Gandharva Wind, *etc. etc.*......................In the last Mythological epoch

when the Gandharvas have saved from their elementary nature merely so much as to be musicians in the paradise of Indra, the Apsarasas appear among other subordinate deities which share in the merry life of Indra's heaven, as the wives of the Gandharvas, but more especially as wives of a licentious sort, and they are promised therefore, too, as a reward to heroes fallen in battle when they are received in the paradise of Indra; and while, in the Rigveda, they assist Soma to pour down his floods, they descend in the epic literature on earth merely to shake the virtue of penitent Sages and to deprive them of the power they would otherwise have acquired through unbroken austerities.'

GOLDSTÜCKER'S *Sanskrit Dictionary.*

VISHṆU'S INCARNATION AS RÁMA.

'Here is described one of the *avatárs,* descents or manifestations of Vishṇu in a visible form. The word *avatár* signifies literally *descent.* The *avatár* which is here spoken of, that in which, according to Indian traditions, Vishṇu descended and appeared upon earth in the corporeal form of Ráma, the hero of the Rámáyana, is the seventh in the series of Indian *avatárs.* Much has been said before now of these *avatárs,* and through deficient knowledge of the ideas and doctrines of India, they have been compared to the sublime dogma of the Christian Incarnation. This is one of the grossest errors that ignorance of the ideas and beliefs of a people has produced. Between the *avatárs* of India and the Christian Incarnation there is such an immensity of difference that it is impossible to find any reasonable analogy that can approximate them. The idea of the *avatárs* is intimately united with that of the Trimúrti; the bond of connection between these two ideas is an essential notion common to both, the notion of Vishṇu. What is the Trimúrti? I have already said that it is composed of three Gods, Brahmá (masculine), Vishṇu the God of *avatárs,* and Śiva. These

three Gods, who when reduced to their primitive and most simple expression are but three cosmogonical personifications, three powers or forces of nature, these Gods, I say, are here found, according to Indian doctrines, entirely external to the true God of India, or Brahma in the neuter gender. Brahma is alone, unchangeable in the midst of creation: all emanates from him, he comprehends all, but he remains extraneous to all: he is Being and the negation of beings. Brahma is never worshipped; the indeterminate Being is never invoked; he is inaccessible to the prayers as the actions of man; humanity, as well as nature, is extraneous to him. External to Brahma rises the Trimúrti, that is to say, Brahmá (masculine) the power which creates, Vishṇu the power which preserves, and Śiva the power which destroys: theogony here commences at the same time with cosmogony. The three divinities of the Trimúrti govern the phenomena of the universe and influence all nature. The real God of India is by himself without power; real efficacious power is attributed only to the three divinities who exist externally to him. Brahmá, Vishṇu, and Śiva, possessed of qualities in part contradictory and attributes that are mutually exclusive, have no other accord or harmony than that which results from the power of things itself, and which is found external to their own thoughts. Such is the Indian Trimúrti. What an immense difference between this Triad and the wonderful Trinity of Christianity! Here there is only one God, who created all, provides for all, governs all. He exists in three Persons equal to one another, and intimately united in one only infinite and eternal substance. The Father represents the eternal thought and the power which created, the Son infinite love, the Holy Spirit universal sanctification. This one and triune God completes by omnipotent power the great work of creation which, when it has come forth from His hands, proceeds in obedience to the laws which He has given it, governed with certain order by His infinite providence.

The immense difference between the Trimúrti of India and the Christian Trinity is found again between the *avatárs* of Vishṇu and the Incarnation of Christ. The *avatár* was effected altogether externally to the Being who is in India regarded as the true God. The manifestation of one essentially cosmogonical divinity wrought for the most part only material and cosmogonical prodigies. At one time it takes the form of the gigantic tortoise which sustains Mount Mandar from sinking in the ocean; at another of the fish which raises the lost Veda from the bottom of the sea, and saves mankind from the waters. When these *avatárs* are not cosmogonical they consist in some protection accorded to men or Gods, a protection which is neither universal nor permanent. The very manner in which the *avatár* is effected corresponds to its material nature, for instance the mysterious vase and the magic liquor by means of which the *avatár* here spoken of takes place. What are the forms which Vishṇu takes in his descents? They are the simple forms of life; he becomes a tortoise, a boar, a fish, but he is not obliged to take the form of intelligence and liberty, that is to say, the form of man. In the *avatár* of Vishṇu is discovered the impress of pantheistic ideas which have always more or less prevailed in India. Does the *avatár* produce a permanent and definitive result in the world? By no means. It is renewed at every catastrophe either of nature or man, and its effects are only transitory........To sum up then, the Indian *avatár* is effected externally to the true God of India, to Brahma; it has only a cosmogonical or historical mission which is neither lasting nor decisive; it is accomplished by means of strange prodigies and magic transformations; it may assume promiscuously all the forms of life; it may be repeated indefinitely. Now let the whole of this Indian idea taken from primitive tradition be compared with the Incarnation of Christ and it will be seen that there is between the two an irreconcilable difference. According to the doctrines of Christianity, the Everlasting Word, Infinite Love, the Son of

God, and equal to Him, assumed a human body, and being born as a man accomplished by his divine act the great miracle of the spiritual redemption of man. His coming had for its sole object to bring erring and lost humanity back to Him; this work being accomplished, and the divine union of men with God being re-established, redemption is complete and remains eternal.

The superficial study of India produced in the last century many erroneous ideas, many imaginary and false parallels between Christianity and the Brahmanical religion. A profounder knowledge of Indian civilization and religion, and philological studies enlarged and guided by more certain principles have dissipated one by one all these errors. The attributes of the Christian God, which by one of those intellectual errors, which Vico attributes to the vanity of the learned, had been transferred to Vishṇu, have by a better inspired philosophy been reclaimed for Christianity, and the result of the two religions, one immoveable and powerless, the other diffusing itself with all its inherent force and energy, has shown further that there is a difference, a real opposition, between the two principles.'

GORRESIO.

KUŚA AND LAVA, *Page* 30.

As the story of the banishment of Sítá and the subsequent birth in Válmíki's hermitage of Kuśa and Lava the rhapsodists of the Rámáyan, is intimately connected with the account in the introductory cantos of Válmíki's composition of the poem, I shall, I trust, be pardoned for extracting it from my rough translation of Kálidása's Rághuvanśa, parts only of which have been offered to the public.

'Then, day by day, the husband's hope grew high;
Gazing with love on Sítá's melting eye:
With anxious care he saw her pallid cheek,
And fondly bade her all her wishes speak.

'Once more I fain would see,' the lady cried,
'The sacred groves that rise on Gangá's side,
Where holy grass is ever fresh and green,
And cattle feeding on the rice are seen:
There would I rest awhile, where once I strayed
Linked in sweet friendship to each hermit maid.'
And Ráma smiled upon his wife, and sware,
With many a tender oath, to grant her prayer.
It chanced, one evening, from a lofty seat
He viewed Ayodhyá stretched before his feet:
He looked with pride upon the royal road
Lined with gay shops their glittering stores that showed,
He looked on Sarjú's silver waves, that bore
The light barks flying with the sail and oar;
He saw the gardens near the town that lay,
Filled with glad citizens and boys at play.
Then swelled the monarch's bosom with delight,
And his heart triumphed at the happy sight.
He turned to Bhadra, standing by his side,—
Upon whose secret news the king relied,—
And bade him say what people said and thought
Of all the exploits that his arm had wrought.
The spy was silent, but, when questioned still,
Thus spake, obedient to his master's will:
'For all thy deeds in peace and battle done
The people praise thee, King, except for one:
This only act of all thy life they blame,—
Thy welcome home of her, thy ravished dame.'
Like iron yielding to the iron's blow,
Sank Ráma, smitten by those words of woe.
His breast, where love and fear for empire vied,
Swayed, like a rapid swing, from side to side.
Shall he this rumour scorn, which blots his life,
Or banish her, his dear and spotless wife?
But rigid Duty left no choice between
His perilled honour and his darling queen.

Called to his side, his brothers wept to trace
The marks of anguish in his altered face.
No longer bright and glorious as of old,
He thus addressed them when the tale was told :
'Alas ! my brothers, that my life should blot
The fame of those the Sun himself begot ;
As from the labouring cloud the driven rain
Leaves on the mirror's polished face a stain.
E'en as an elephant who loathes the stake
And the strong chain he has no power to break,
I cannot brook this cry on every side,
That spreads like oil upon the moving tide.
I leave the daughter of Videha's King,
And the fair blossom soon from her to spring,
As erst, obedient to my sire's command,
I left the empire of the sea-girt land.
Good is my queen, and spotless ; but the blame
Is hard to bear, the mockery and the shame.
Men blame the pure Moon for the darkened ray,
When the black shadow takes the light away.
And, O my brothers, if ye wish to see
Ráma live long from this reproach set free,
Let not your pity labour to control
The firm sad purpose of his changeless soul.'

Thus Ráma spake. The sorowing brothers heard
His stern resolve, without an answering word ;
For none among them dared his voice to raise,
That will to question :—and they could not praise.
'Beloved brother,' thus the monarch cried
To his dear Lakshmaṇ, whom he called aside,—
Lakshmaṇ, who knew no will save his alone
Whose hero deeds through all the world were known :—
'My queen has told me that she longs to rove
Beneath the shade of Saint Válmíki's grove :
Now mount thy car, away my lady bear ;
Tell all, and leave her in the forest there.'

The car was brought, the gentle lady smiled,
As the glad news her trusting heart beguiled.
She mounted up: Sumantra held the reins;
And forth the coursers bounded o'er the plains.
She saw green fields in all their beauty dressed,
And thanked her husband in her loving breast.
Alas! deluded queen! she little knew
How changed was he whom she believed so true;
How one she worshipped like the Heavenly Tree
Could, in a moment's time, so deadly be.
Her right eye throbbed,—ill-omened sign, to tell
The endless loss of him she loved so well,
And to the lady's saddening heart revealed
The woe that Lakshman, in his love, concealed.
Pale grew the bloom of her sweet face,—as fade
The lotus blossoms,—by that sign dismayed.
'Oh, may this omen,'—was her silent prayer,—
'No grief to Ráma or his brothers bear!'

When Lakshman, faithful to his brother, stood
Prepared to leave her in the distant wood,
The holy Gangá, flowing by the way,
Raised all her hands of waves to bid him stay.
At length with sobs and burning tears that rolled
Down his sad face, the king's command he told;
As when a monstrous cloud, in evil hour,
Rains from its labouring womb a stony shower.
She heard, she swooned, she fell upon the earth,
Fell on that bosom whence she sprang to birth.
As, when the tempest in its fury flies,
Low in the dust the prostrate creeper lies,
So, struck with terror sank she on the ground,
And all her gems, like flowers, lay scattered round.
But Earth, her mother, closed her stony breast,
And, filled with doubt, denied her daughter rest.
She would not think the Chief of Raghu's race
Would thus his own dear guiltless wife disgrace.

Stunned and unconscious, long the lady lay,
And felt no grief, her senses all astray.
But gentle Lakshmaṇ, with a brother's care,
Brought back her sense, and with her sense, despair.
But not her wrongs, her shame, her grief, could wring
One angry word against her lord the King :
Upon herself alone the blame she laid,
For tears and sighs that would not yet be stayed.
To soothe her anguish Lakshmaṇ gently strove ;
He showed the path to Saint Válmíki's grove ;
And craved her pardon for the share of ill
He wrought, obedient to his brother's will.
'O, long and happy, dearest brother, live !
I have to praise', she cried, 'and not forgive :
To do his will should be thy noblest praise ;
As Vishṇu ever Indra's will obeys.
Return, dear brother : on each royal dame
Bestow a blessing in poor Sítá's name,
And bid them, in their love, kind pity take
Upon her offspring, for the father's sake.
And speak my message in the monarch's ear,
The last last words of mine that he shall hear :
'Say, was it worthy of thy noble race
Thy guiltless queen thus lightly to disgrace ?
For idle tales to spurn thy faithful bride,
Whose constant truth the searching fire had tried ?
Or may I hope thy soul refused consent,
And but thy voice decreed my banishment ?
Hope that no care could turn, no love could stay
The lightning stroke that falls on me to-day ?
That sins committed in the life that's fled
Have brought this evil on my guilty head ?
Think not I value now my widowed life,
Worthless to her who once was Ráma's wife.
I only live because I hope to see
The dear dear babe that will resemble thee.

And then my task of penance shall be done,
With eyes uplifted to the scorching sun;
So shall the life that is to come restore
Mine own dear husband, to be lost no more.'
And Lakshmaṇ swore her every word to tell,
Then turned to go, and bade the queen farewell.
Alone with all her woes, her piteous cries
Rose like a butchered lamb's that struggling dies.
The reverend sage who from his dwelling came
For sacred grass and wood to feed the flame,
Heard her loud shrieks that rent the echoing wood,
And, quickly following, by the mourner stood.
Before the sage the lady bent her low,
Dried her poor eyes, and strove to calm her woe.
With blessings on her hopes the blameless man
In silver tones his soothing speech began:
'First of all faithful wives, O Queen, art thou;
And can I fail to mourn thy sorrows now?
Rest in this holy grove, nor harbour fear
Where dwell in safety e'en the timid deer.
Here shall thine offspring safely see the light,
And be partaker of each holy rite.
Here, near the hermits' dwellings, shalt thou lave
Thy limbs in Tonse's sin-destroying wave,
And on her isles, by prayer and worship, gain
Sweet peace of mind, and rest from care and pain.
Each hermit-maiden, with her sweet soft voice,
Shall soothe thy woe, and bid thy heart rejoice:
With fruit and early flowers thy lap shall fill,
And offer grain that springs for us at will.
And here, with labour light, thy task shall be
To water carefully each tender tree,
And learn how sweet a nursing mother's joy,
Ere on thy bosom rest thy darling boy.'

....

That very night the banished Sítá bare

Two royal children, most divinely fair.

....

The saint Válmíki, with a friend's delight,
Graced Sítá's offspring with each holy rite.
Kuśa and Lava—such the names they bore—
Learnt, e'en in childhood, all the Vedas' lore;
And then the bard, their minstrel souls to train,
Taught them to sing his own immortal strain.
And Ráma's deeds her boys so sweetly sang,
That Sítá's breast forgot her bitterest pang.

....

Then Sítá's children, by the saint's command,
Sang the Rámáyan, wandering through the land.
How could the glorious poem fail to gain
Each heart, each ear that listened to the strain!
So sweet each minstrel's voice who sang the praise
Of Ráma deathless in Válmíki's lays.
Ráma himself amid the wondering throng
Marked their fair forms, and loved the noble song,
While, still and weeping, round the nobles stood,
As on a windless morn, a dewy wood.
On the two minstrels all the people gazed,
Praised their fair looks and marvelled as they praised;
For every eye amid the throng could trace
Ráma's own image in each youthful face.
Then spoke the king himself and bade them say
Who was their teacher, whose the wondrous lay.
Soon as Válmíki, mighty saint, he saw,
He bowed his head in reverential awe.
'These are thy children' cried the saint, 'recall
Thine own dear Sítá, pure and true through all.'
'O holy father,' thus the king replied,
'The faithful lady by the fire was tried;
But the foul demon's too successful arts
Raised light suspicions in my people's hearts.

Grant that their breasts may doubt her faith no more,
And thus my Sítá and her sons restore.'

Raghuvaṇśa Cantos XIV, XV.

PARAŚURÁMA, Page 316.

'He cleared the earth thrice seven times of the Kshatriya caste, and filled with their blood the five large lakes of Samanta, from which he offered libations to the race of Bhrigu. Offering a solemn sacrifice to the King of the Gods Paraśuráma presented the earth to the ministering priests. Having given the earth to Kaśyapa, the hero of immeasurable prowess retired to the Mahendra mountain, where he still resides; and in this manner was there enmity between him and the race of the Kshatriyas, and thus was the whole earth conquered by Paraśuráma'. The destruction of the Kshatriyas by Paraśuráma had been provoked by the cruelty of the Kshatriyas. *Chips from a German Workshop, Vol. II. P.* 334.

The scene in which he appears is probably interpolated for the sake of making him declare Ráma to be Vishṇu. 'Herr von Schlegel has often remarked to me, 'says Lassen, 'that without injuring the connexion of the story all the chapters [of the Rámáyan] might be omitted in which Ráma is regarded as an incarnation of Vishṇu. In fact, where the incarnation of Vishṇu as the four sons of Daśaratha is described, the great sacrifice is already ended, and all the priests remunerated at the termination, when the new sacrifice begins at which the Gods appear, then withdraw, and then first propose the incarnation to Vishṇu. If it had been an original circumstance of the story, the Gods would certainly have deliberated on the matter earlier, and the celebration of the sacrifice would have continued without interruption.' LASSEN, *Indische Alterthumskunde, Vol. I. P.* 489.

YAMA, Page 241.

Son of Vivasvat=Jima son of Vivanghvat, the Jamshíd of the later Persians.

FATE, Page 241.

'The idea of fate was different in India from that which prevailed in Greece. In Greece fate was a mysterious, inexorable power which governed men and human events, and from which it was impossible to escape. In India Fate was rather an inevitable consequence of actions done in births antecedent to one's present state of existence, and was therefore connected with the doctrine of metempsychosis. A misfortune was for the most part a punishment, an expiation of ancient faults not yet entirely cancelled.'

GORRESIO.

VIŚVÁMITRA, Page 275.

'Though of royal extraction, Viśvámitra conquered for himself and his family the privileges of a Brahman. He became a Brahman, and thus broke through all the rules of caste. The Brahmans cannot deny the fact, because it forms one of the principal subjects of their legendary poems. But they have spared no pains to represent the exertions of Viśvámitra, in his struggle for Brahmanhood, as so superhuman that no one would easily be tempted to follow his example. No mention is made of these monstrous penances in the Veda, where the struggle between Viśvámitra, the leader of the Kuśikas or Bharatas, and the Brahman Vaśishtha, the leader of the white-robed Tritsus, is represented as the struggle of two rivals for the place of Purohita or chief priest and minister at the court of King Sudás, the son of Pijavana.'

Chips from a German Workshop, Vol. II. P. 336.

HOUSEHOLD GODS, Page 374.

'No house is supposed to be without its tutelary divinity, but the notion attached to this character is now very far from precise. The deity who is the object of hereditary and family worship, the *Kuladevatá*, is always one of the leading personages of the Hindu mythology, as Śiva, Vishṇu or Durgá, but the *Grihadevatá* rarely bears any distinct appellation. In Bengal, the domestic god is sometimes the *Sálagrám* stone, sometimes the *tulasí* plant, sometimes a basket with a little rice in it, and sometimes a water-jar— to either of which a brief adoration is daily addressed, most usually by the females of the family. Occasionally small images of Lakshmí or Chaṇḍí fulfil the office, or should a snake appear, he is venerated as the guardian of the dwelling. In general, however, in former times, the household deities were regarded as the unseen spirits of ill, the ghosts and goblins who hovered about every spot, and claimed some particular sites as their own. Offerings were made to them in the open air, by scattering a little rice with a short formula at the close of all ceremonies to keep them in good humour.

The household gods correspond better with the genii locorum than with the lares or penates of antiquity.'

H. H. WILSON.

INDEX OF PRINCIPAL NAMES.

A.

B.

C.

D.

F.

G.

H.

I.

J.

K.

L.

M.

N.

P.

R.

S.

W.

Y.